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THE
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER:
OR,
H I S T O R Y
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS
OF
I R E L A N D,

The FOURTH SESSION of the FIFTH PARLIAMENT,
in the Reign of his PRESENT MAJESTY;

Which met at DUBLIN on the 10th of JANUARY, and ended
the 16th of AUGUST, 1793.

VOL. XIII.

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M,DCC,XCIII.



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THE
PARLIAMENTARY REGISTER:
OR,
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 1793.

THE House being met, according to the last prorogation, a message was brought from his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant by the Honourable Henry Fane, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, requiring the House to attend his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers.

Accordingly Mr. Speaker, with the House, went up to attend his Excellency.

And being returned, the Speaker reported that the House had attended his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers, where his Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament; of which he said, to prevent mistakes, he had obtained a copy, which he read to the House; and the same was afterwards read by the Clerk at the table, as follows:

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I have his Majesty’s commands to meet you in Parliament, and to express his satisfaction in resorting to your councils in the present situation of affairs.

" His Majesty feels the utmost concern that various attempts should have been made to excite a spirit of discontent and disturbance, and that appearances should have manifested themselves in any part of this kingdom, of a design to effect by violence an alteration in the constitution.

" It is an additional ground of uneasiness to his Majesty that views of conquest and dominion should have incited France to interfere with the government of other countries, and to adopt measures with regard to his Majesty's allies, the States General, neither conformable to the law of nations nor the positive stipulations of existing treaties, especially when both his Majesty and the States General had observed the strictest neutrality with regard to the affairs of France.

" Under these circumstances I have ordered, by his Majesty's commands, an augmentation of the forces upon this establishment.

" By the advice of the privy council, measures have been taken to prevent the exportation of corn, provisions, and naval stores, arms and ammunition. The circumstances which rendered these measures necessary, will, I trust, justify any temporary infringement of the laws, and will induce you to give them a parliamentary sanction.

" It will afford his Majesty the greatest satisfaction, if, by a temperate and firm conduct, the blessings of peace can be continued; but he feels assured of your zealous concurrence in his determination to provide for the security and interests of his dominions, and to fulfil those positive engagements to which he is equally bound by the honour of his crown and the general interests of the empire.

" Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

" I have ordered the national accounts to be laid before you, and I have no doubt of your readiness to grant such supplies for the public service as the honour and security of his Majesty's crown and government, and the exigencies of the times, may require.

" My Lords and Gentlemen,

" The agriculture, the manufactures, and particularly the linen manufacture, the Protestant charter schools, and other public institutions, which have so repeatedly been the objects of your care, will, I doubt not, engage your accustomed regard and liberality.

" I am to recommend to you, in his Majesty's name, to adopt such measures as may be most advisable for the maintenance of internal tranquillity, and for this purpose to render more effectual the law for establishing a militia in this kingdom.

" His Majesty has the fullest confidence that you will, on all occasions, shew your firm determination to enforce due obedience to the laws, and to maintain the authority of government, in which you may depend upon his Majesty's cordial co-operation and support: and I have it in particular command from his Majesty to recommend it to you to apply yourselves to the consideration of such measures as may be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his Majesty's subjects in support of the established constitution; with this view his Majesty trusts that the situation of his Majesty's Catholic subjects will engage your serious attention, and in the consideration of this subject he relies on the wisdom and liberality of his Parliament.

" I am truly sensible of the repeated testimonies which I have received of your approbation, and I will endeavour to merit a continuance of your good opinion, by strenuously exerting the power with which I am entrusted for the maintenance of our excellent constitution in church and state, as the best security for the liberty of the subject, and the prosperity of Ireland."

The Earl of TYRONE (son to the Marquis of Waterford) after a short prefatory speech, moved an address to the throne, as follows:

To the KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY.

The humble ADDRESS of the KNIGHTS, CITIZENS, and BURGESSES in Parliament assembled.

" We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Ireland, in parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Majesty, impressed with the warmest feelings of duty, loyalty, and attachment to your Majesty's sacred person, family and government.

" We truly participate in the concern your Majesty feels at the attempts that have been made to promote a spirit of discontent through this kingdom, manifesting an appearance of a design to effect by violence an alteration in our happy constitution.

" We cannot too much regret that views of conquest and aggrandizement should have actuated France to interfere in the government of other countries, and to adopt measures with regard to your Majesty's allies, the States General, neither conformable to the law of nations, nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. We might have entertained a just hope of a far different conduct, as your Majesty and the States General had observed the strictest neutrality with regard to the affairs of France.

" Under these circumstances, we entirely approve the augmentation of your Majesty's forces upon this establishment; we

shall also be ready to give a parliamentary sanction to those orders which have been given with the advice of the Privy Council, for preventing the exportation of corn, provisions, naval stores, arms and ammunition.

“ We shall take a sincere part in the satisfaction your Majesty must experience, if from the temperate and firm conduct of your Majesty the blessings of peace can be continued ; and your Majesty may rely upon our zealous and candid concurrence, in such measures as may enable your Majesty to provide for the security and interests of your dominions, and for the performance of those positive engagement, in which the honour of your crown and the general interests of the empire are so essentially concerned.

“ We shall cheerfully grant such supplies as the particular exigencies of the times may require for the public service, and for the honourable and secure support of your Majesty’s crown and government.

“ Our attention will be directed to our agriculture, and manufactures, and particularly the linen manufactures, and to the Protestant charter-schools and other public institutions, which have usually received the aid and bounty of parliament.

“ We shall be anxious to adopt such measures as shall appear most conducive to the maintenance of internal tranquillity ; and for this purpose we shall make more effectual the provisions for establishing a militia in this kingdom.

“ Your Majesty may depend upon our determined resolution, to enforce a due obedience to the laws, and to maintain the authority of government, to which we are so strongly encouraged by your Majesty’s gracious promise of a firm co-operation and support : and in obedience to your Majesty’s particular recommendation, we shall apply ourselves to the consideration of such measures as may be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of your Majesty’s subjects, in support of the established constitution. We thank your Majesty for your reliance on our wisdom and liberality, and we shall be ready to advert to the situation of our Roman Catholic brethren, and shall endeavour to form our decision upon this important subject after a full and serious consideration.

“ We return your Majesty our sincere thanks for continuing the Earl of Westmorland in the government of this kingdom, and shall be happy to assist his exertions for maintaining our excellent constitution in church and state, which we have experienced as the surest means of promoting the public welfare and prosperity, and of securing the liberty of the subject under the mild influence of your Majesty’s auspicious reign.”

The Honourable Mr. WESLEY seconded the motion. He said, that at a time when opinions were spreading throughout Europe inimical to kingly government, it behoved us, in a particular manner, to lay before our gracious Sovereign our determination to support and maintain the constitution; he took notice, that under the present reign this country had risen to a state of unexampled prosperity. He said that the augmentation of the forces, as mentioned in the speech, had, from the circumstances of the times, become necessary. He reprobated, in very severe terms, the conduct of the French towards their king, and their invasion of the territories of sovereign princes, and their irruption into the Austrian Netherlands. He applauded the conduct of the Administration of this country for issuing the proclamation of the 8th of November; and he condemned the attempt of a set of men styling themselves National Guards, and appearing in military array; a set of men unknown in the country, except by their attempts to overthrow the government; the conduct of Administration on that occasion entitled them to the confidence of the people. In regard to what had been recommended in the speech from the throne, respecting our Catholic fellow-subjects, he could not repress expressing his approbation on that head; he had no doubt of the loyalty of the Catholics of this country, and he trusted that when the question would be brought forward, respecting that description of men, that we would lay aside all animosities, and act with moderation and dignity, and not with the fury and violence of partizans.

Mr. JOHN O'NEILL said, he rose to take the earliest opportunity of expressing his warmest approbation of the address; he was happy in joining the unanimity which he hoped would prevail, in expressing in the strongest manner, every sentiment of loyalty and affection to his Majesty, and inviolable attachment to the constitution: expressions of loyalty and attachment, which at another time might be omitted, were become necessary now, as writings disseminating the poison of disaffection and sedition, had found their way into all parts of the country, and ought to be repelled by the strongest declarations of the abhorrence and contempt in which every loyal subject, every honest man, must hold them.

Feeling, as he did, the country brought into some danger by those wicked and disgraceful publications, he hoped that men, possessing the same sentiments with him, would use every means of strengthening the government, and supporting the constitution.

It gave him much pleasure, to observe that the speech recommended to the attention of Parliament the situation of the Roman Catholics:—the loyalty and good conduct of that people,

were rapidly removing the prejudices of the constituent body ; and there could be no doubt, that his Majesty's recommendation would have infinite weight, not only with Parliament, but with all ranks of persons.

He concluded with exhorting every man who loved the constitution, to rally round the throne, and now, in the moment of trial, manifest their wisdom and courage in defending all that is valuable ; and by the strongest expressions of affectionate attachment, shew their regard to that king, who lives in the hearts of his people.

MR. GRATTAN said, our situation is certainly alarming, but by no means surprizing—'tis the necessary, natural and obvious result of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers ; the persons who had opposed our liberty in 82, were made our ministers—afterwards the country forgave them, but they never forgave the country : they attempted to put down the constitution, and now they have put down the government. We told them so—we admonished them—we told them that their driving system would not do—we had no objection to their private characters, or their humble, natural relationships of life, but that they were absolutely, totally, radically, disqualified to govern.

Don't they remember 90 we warned them.—They said we were severe—I am sure we were prophetic—again in 91 we repeated our admonition—told them that a government of clerks would not do—that a government by rank majorities would not do—that the government of the treasury would not do—that Ireland would not be long governed by the trade of parliament. We mentioned this when Lord Buckingham ran away from this kingdom and Lord Westmorland succeeded to his offices. We told them that a nation who had rescued her liberties from the giant of old England, in 82, would not long bear to be trodden on by the violence of a few pigmies whom the caprice of a court had appointed ministers.

I remember the beginning of the last session, I had the honour of submitting in this House some observations on this head, and my honourable friend also in the course of the session assured you that your system of government was insatuation ; we have now to lament the effects of that insatuation, and though I allow foreign revolutions have had a certain effect on domestic discontent, yet the causes of that discontent were laid by ministers who might have seen the state of foreign politics, and have foreseen the forcible influence of that state on domestic disorders. We are now, by a course of mal-administration, brought back to that condition of discontent and jealousy which in 82 produced an interposition from the king ; we then laboured under the ill effects of a bad constitution—we now labour under the ill effects of a bad government.

The periodical sales of the House of Commons, the public declaration of those sales, the encrease of 20 parliamentary provisions, and what was more, the acknowledgment that such encrease was a political expedient to buy the members; the repeated declarations that the best Minister for Ireland was he who bought the House of Commons cheapest.—The sale of divers peerages for money to be laid out by the Minister in procuring for his followers seats in the House of Commons, the sale of the functions of one House, for buying votes in the other, it was the case of the barren land bill; the patronage of all kind of abuses and speculations, as in the case of the police—the rejection of every constitutional bill, place bill, pension bill—responsibility bill, tending to assimilate our constitution to that of Great Britain. The arguments advanced for the rejection of the two former by a law officer of the crown, who said that the Government in Ireland should be stronger than that of Great Britain, and who, in the application of that argument could only mean that the Parliament of Ireland should be more abandoned.—These things, and many more taken separately, or altogether, have totally, and universally, deprived of all weight, authority, or credit, the Parliament of Ireland.

I am sure our Ministers meant to go no further, they only meant an attack on the constitution, but they have undermined the throne; it is impossible in a constitution with parts connected as ours to put down the authority of parliament, without involving the monarchy, and while our ministers only intended to free the throne from the checks and limits of a parliament, they have deprived it of its best support, the poise and authority of a parliamentary constitution.

I have heard of seditious writings of Mr. Paine, and other writers—these writings may be criminal, but it is the declarations of the ministers of the crown that have made them dangerous.—Mr. Paine has said monarchy is a useless incumbrance, a minister of the crown comes forth and says he is right; monarchy cost this country, to buy the Parliament, half a million at one period, and half a million at another. Mr. Paine has said an hereditary legislative nobility is an absurdity, our minister observes he has understated the evil; it is a body of legislators whose seats are sold by the ministers to purchase another body of legislators to vote against the people; but here is the difference between Mr. Paine and our authors—the latter are ministers and their declaration evidence against their royal master. They say we love monarchy—we love the king's government which, however, we must acknowledge, governs by selling one house, and buying the other. So much more powerful agents of republicanism, are the Irish ministers, than such authors as Mr. Paine; that if the former wished to go into rebellion in 93 as in 82, some of them

went into sedition—they could not excite the people to high treason, by stronger provocation than their own public declarations, and the strongest arguments against monarchical government, are those delivered by themselves in favour of their own administration.

There are two species of levellers—levellers of principles and levellers of institutions, and the former always make way for the latter—the latter is the death, and the former the disease, and both together form in political life the progress of sin and dissolution. That minister who sold the peerage was a leveller—that minister who publicly bought the House by the increase of about twenty, which is a difference of forty votes, was a leveller. He was a leveller of character and authority, and principle, without which political institutions vanish. The French levellers destroyed the nobility and the throne to erect the despotism of the people. The Irish levellers have endeavoured to destroy the power and credit of the nobility and the commons, to erect the despotism of the king—in that endeavour they have undermined the throne—they have stripped the king's government, together with the two houses of parliament, of all kind of credit or authority, or weight, in the minds of the people of Ireland.

Permit me to consider the conduct of our Ministers, in its particular reference to that oppressed part of his Majesty's subjects—the Catholics. I don't mean now to go into their claims. I retain my former conviction in their favour, but if I were their enemy, I could not approve of their treatment; our ministry begins by offering them a personal incivility, so they state in their published debate. I am not a judge of the fact, but they are of the impression. They were so critically and unequivocally situated with respect to political and civil rank, that even courtesy from a lord lieutenant's secretary, would have been a compliment and slight, is an insult; they are the only part of his Majesty's subjects so situated—the Catholics will soon be in that situation no longer—after offending the Catholics by manner, the next unadvised step of the ministry, was to attack them by artifice, and accordingly they endeavoured to detach and divide the landed interest of the Catholics from the body at large, which was an attempt to destroy the subordination of the common people, and to set population adrift from the influence of property, and lest there should remain still some influence over their minds, the ministry make some blind and imperfect overtures to the Catholic clergy, to detach them also from the claims of their flock, which was to detach their flocks from them and to leave that flock entirely destitute of all principle whatsoever of subordination either to landlord or ecclesiastic. I am not a friend to superstition or subjugation, and yet there is a certain degree of moral influence which the pastor may safely have over his flock, and the landlord

over his tenantry, without which I fear you would extinguish the soul of subordination—however, the minister endeavours to leave the Catholic, over whom the State cannot have by connection any ascendancy, free from any controul or check, either of their church or their own aristocracy—and it is a strong presumption in favour of that body, thus set adrift as it were by the design, that it recovered the principles of union, and has preserved the principles of subordination, and should have left its enemies without even a pretence to oppress them. The next impolitic step taken by our minister was the institution of a paper war on the subject of religion—the declarations as you will find in the Catholic report of the transaction—managed, procured or sanctioned by Government, led to counter declaration, and finally discussion at large, on the broad principle of philosophy, which ministry knew was against them, and in an appeal to the people who, from interest must have been against them, likewise: the ministry embitter this paper war, by its own rethoricians and scribblers, and publish notoriously from the castle such personal invectives against respectable Catholics, such contumelious stuff! You must recollect it, written, published, and spread by the castle against the pretensions and persons of the Catholic body; such invectives as must have roused the spirit of indignation as well as liberty, to vindicate their fame and fortunes against a scandalous and opprobrious government.

The next unfortunate error in this business was a declaration from a right honourable gentleman, high in confidence, that on a certain event government would suppress the Catholics with the force of both countries. I incline to believe the threat was unauthorized; nor do I pretend to say it was unconditional; it was on a certain event, or supposition, that these men committed something which government might call a great offence; but who had a right to suppose such a body of men would commit an act which will justify his Majesty's ministers, to levy war on so vast a portion of his people—a liege subject, living within the peace of the king, to suppose him a rebel in order to threaten him with arms, is to tell him he is not a subject, but a slave. Without discussing any further objections to such language, it is sufficient to say, that the direct and obvious tendency of such a menace was to make the Catholic body attribute to the successes of France that safety and privilege which should have appeared to proceed from benignity of the king, and the justice of parliament. I say the tendency of such a declaration; but the effect of it has been, I believe, only to manifest his Majesty's gracious and signal interposition in manifesting his paternal love, to his loyal subjects, and affording them protection against his ministers.

The next unfortunate error of our ministry was their interference with grand juries against the Catholics, because they were giving to the Protestants false hopes, at the same time that they were exciting against the Catholics false fears. They took the lead in fomenting a religious war—they began it—they acted in the mongrel capacity of country gentlemen and ministers—they acted against Catholics as country gentlemen, and encouraged the Protestants as ministers. They had, I understand, informed the British ministry that the influence of the crown could not induce a majority to vote against the Catholic pretensions, and then they themselves take a leading part to make that difficulty in the country, of which they complained of, in their dispatches. To the country gentlemen they say, will you bear that these men shall get the elective franchise, and to the British minister, you see these country gentlemen, and the consequences of this conduct is, that the Irish ministry become parties against the people, and have a personal and country interest to exclude them; not as Catholics but as enemies.

Among other instances of the intolerance of ministers, is something of religious war in an address from the corporation of Dublin to the other corporations of the kingdom. I consider this publication as the act of the castle—the act of their city delegation—the composition of their city agents. The city has been a long time the object of their mischief; whenever the city is left to herself, she will ever speak with moderation and propriety,—and her mistake in this address has been to have resigned her better understanding to the intrigues and interference of the castle. I shall observe on this publication so far as to say, that, according to the sentence it pronounces, that the doom of the Catholic, in all times to come, is perpetual exclusion from the franchise of the constitution; and, according to the law, that publication advances the title of the Protestant to his lands and privileges—is the right of conquest.—If then the three millions of Catholics should, with the assistance of twenty-six millions in France, rebel and dispossess you of your properties and charters, they have in the city publication an authority—they have the law of conquest—and they have your excuse for appealing to the law of conquest, because they have the sentence of the corporation—nothing else to relieve them from the doom of slavery!

The result of this interposition of the Irish government in this religious war—the consequence of having poured their angry ingredients into the cup of religious fury, has been, that as far as relates to Irish government, they have totally lost the confidence of the Catholics—they have lost the confidence of one part of his majesty's subjects by their corruption, and of the other, by their intolerance.

In such a situation of domestic discontent, and foreign revolution, what measures have they taken? One would naturally have thought they would have instantly resorted to one very odious measure—the assembling of parliament. No, they prorogue it, and yet there are many reasons for calling it. The example of England was one; if there was reason to think French politics had made any progress in Great Britain, there was tenfold reason to fear, they would make a progress in Ireland; because Ireland had tenfold her grievances. The minister of England had not proclaimed nor purchased parliament; but there was another cause—the calling out the militia. Whenever his majesty calls out the militia in England, he is obliged to call a parliament: and here, though the law is not the same, the reason is stronger, because your militia without parliament, is imperfect; for the jealousy of government in 78 struck out in the privy council the compulsory clause. By the law of the land, you cannot arm Catholics—by the omission of the militia bill, you cannot compel Protestants; so, unless you called a parliament, you might have a militia, but no men. So that, either the calling out the militia was unnecessary, or the proroguing parliament essential to make that militia effectual, was improper. See the consequence, you try in Waterford, it would not be received—you try it in Cork, the inhabitants, who appear a very sensible set of men, meet, consider, and decide: That, in offering the militia, government only means to resort to the old practice—patronage: and as to the execution of the laws, they conceive that they themselves are better qualified for that task than such a government—and they all suspect and repudiate your militia.

The police of the city of Dublin has taught men to be apprehensive of your militia, because you have unfortunately while you professed to mean the due execution of law, intended patronage, and protected violence: another reason for calling a parliament, was the state of public credit—your funds had fallen, your credit had stopped, and the cause was to be found in the unsettled state of the Catholic claims, only to be settled by parliament. And how do ministers settle them, and restore public credit? By prorogation. Surely, the ministry cannot be pronounced innocent of that public distress, when they might have removed the cause by doing in November what will be done in January, and what had been a subject before them for near twelve months.

The state of the public mind was another cause. The nation had grievances—the Catholics you now allow and apprehend to have grievances—levellers, if such there be, whose principles in themselves are a grievance. You give them all time to form and unite, if they please, in one great mass, for parliament, when at length it should meet, to decompound and analyse. Some part of

the people our ministry had conceived to be republican. Some part of our Catholics had been represented as affecting a popish congress, in imitation of a French republic; with this opinion of his Majesty's, it is somewhat astonishing, that they give two months fair play to such imputed principles to act and form against the State; so, if the imputation was founded, the remedy, at the time you choose to call parliament, had been too late.

You must have heard of French emissaries—if there was any danger of them you gave them also fair play; you left them also two months to taint the integrity of three-fourths of your island, and the present allegiance of that body, notwithstanding such opportunities, is a strong refutation of the charges of their enemies, who now, under the direction of the king, must do justice to that loyalty they had attempted to traduce and to proscribe.

There was another reason for calling parliament—a convention. Was it not an object, by a liberal and speedy settlement, to have anticipated the graces of concession, and to display the justice of parliament, at a time when you were trembling at the unpopularity of parliaments, and the prevalence of conventions? What was the cause of this neglect to call parliament?—you had not made up your mind on this question. In the summer, and with the grand juries, you had made up your mind very readily; and then you are to unmake it and form that mind a new one, and have a better. Thus you decide when you should deliberate, and deliberate when you should have decided; and, in the mean time, remain incapable either to give counsel, or to receive it. The effect of this neglect was like the other parts of your conduct; to discredit parliament, it says, vote taxes, pass the revenue bill; but as to counsel we will call for Mr. A. or Mr. B. or even a clerk, to consult *de arduis regni*; any one but the hereditary council of the king, and the grand council of the nation.

You call a council, but it is the privy council—you sent, I understand, to some of the opposition; you were honest enough to make them responsible for getting you out of difficulties, into which, if you had followed their advice, you never had been precipitated; perhaps the best advice any friend could have given you, was to walk off, and turn to any trade except that of a minister; however you get advice somewhere or other, and you take measures; what are they? a militia—but I believe that is a measure of no efficacy, for the reasons I have given already; you try government volunteers; but that is another measure, on whose efficacy I do not suppose you rely much; if it has any great effect, it must revive the volunteers by example; if such a measure is necessary in government, it must be equally necessary

for the people at large, and as a direct tendency to produce a general armament; you resorted to other measures, a proclamation, a militia, an increase of your troops, and an association—in the proclamation I acknowledge I see a milder language than we have been accustomed to hear of late years from the ministers of the crown. I don't go into the merits or objects of that proclamation now, but I must lament one word contained in it—pretended grievances. Is the sale of peerage a pretended grievance? Is the creation of twenty new places as provision for members of parliament, to govern and direct their deliberation—is the purchase of the House of Commons, or in one sentence the extinction of the use, credit, and authority of parliamentary institution, a pretended grievance? To rise in arms to redress grievance real or pretended, is, I apprehend, against law, but here the criminality of the act appears to be the pretence of the grievance; and the consequence of such expression would be naturally to direct the hopes of the people from government to themselves; it says, if you look for redress, you must not look to us, and [a proclamation, therefore, so worded, though it may disperse, cannot pacify.—The other means is association—the idea of supporting government by association is an appeal to the collective body of the people, and you make that appeal when 3-fourths cannot be a part of that association, unless they associate against their own franchise: you must let them into the constitution before they associate to support it, and therefore the calling of parliament was a necessary preliminary to an association, instead of making an association previous to a parliament, and to those rights and privileges, whose preservation must be the object of the associations, and whose creation has not yet taken place. I have no objection to an association, if monarchy is in danger, or even if there should be a doubt, I think it incumbent on every man to rally round the throne.

It is the felicity of these islands, that however we may require to reform abuses, we are not now to seek for a constitution.—On the militia I have already observed; the augmentation of the army, I know precisely what it is; it may be very proper, it may be trifling, it may be illegal, but every measure necessary to order I will support.

We have a monarchy, the best form of government for rational and durable liberty; it is a fortunate circumstance attending that monarchy, that the title of the family on the throne is interwoven with the assurances of our title of liberty, and now the king himself comes as the second deliverer of his people, and it may perhaps be considered as another circumstance not inauspicious to the duration of liberty, that the characteristical properties of the family on the throne, very opposite to encroaching ambition, should be distinguished by honesty and hereditary courage.

We have to advise and limit monarchy, and to exercise legislative power—a parliament consisting of a senate without which no country was ever temperately or securely conducted: and a commons, without whose existence the people cannot be free, for such a system who is there that would not associate? But it is for its blessings, and not its abuses. I would associate for our present constitution on principles directly opposite to those on which it has been administered in Ireland. I would associate, because I do not think it is a monarchy, the exercise of whose authority depends on selling the honours of one house of parliament, to buy the honesty of the other, because I do not think it is a senate whose honours should be sold, and because I do not think it is a house whose votes must be periodically bought for a million or half a million. To associate, therefore, for our constitution as administered in Ireland, would be an association for abuses, an association for grievance, an association for such mischiefs, that if not speedily abolished must destroy our most excellent constitution, and therefore would be an association, not for our constitution, but its destruction. Do you mean to say we are sensible of the virtues of the King and Constitution, and they may add, of the wisdom of the Earl of Westmorland. With government do you mean to embody the virtues of the king, with the offences of his officer, and to make the association as a ridiculous mockery of his majesty, and a false certificate for a bad servant, that is to say, we are so very fond of our most excellent constitution that we don't care how much it is abused; it is to profess one thing, and to associate for another; to profess the constitution, and to combine for its abuses. But association is but a palliative, unless the remedy goes along with it, which is the remedy; settle the great question with our Catholic brethren; settle on principles of liberty, of unanimity, and of extensive freedom.

What is the other remedy? 'Tis a word you will find in the books. The lawyer peruses the description daily. 'Tis a parliament; a free and independent parliament, chosen by the people. Whether the people have that at present, I need not debate, but I repeat it, the radical cure is a free and independent parliament, chosen by the people.

I shall amend the address—that part of it which relates to his Majesty is cold and impolitic—his interposition to heal our religious animosities, is an act of distinguished wisdom—as such it should be marked particularly at a time when attempts have been made on the thrones of princes—at such a time I would mark to the Catholics the King as the deliverer of his people. I would distinguish him from his ministers. I would mark that monarch who had rescued his people from the hands of those ministers,—that however we may abhor their proceedings, we shall, if neces-

sary, unite, to rally in support of the throne, keeping pure of leaning to any French politics, or any wishes in favour of that nation, now on the eve of a war with a country, with whom we are by the crown, by the law, by interest, and by every political tie, for ever to be connected.

I move you, that an amendment be made, by inserting after the word "constitution," the following words, "We admire the wisdom which at so critical a season has prompted your Majesty to come forward to take a leading part in healing the animosities of your people on account of religion: We shall take into our immediate consideration the subject graciously recommended from the throne; and at a time when doctrines pernicious to freedom and dangerous to monarchical government are propagated in foreign countries, we shall not fail to impress your Majesty's Catholic subjects with a sense of the singular and eternal obligation they owe to the throne, and to your Majesty's royal person and family."

HON. DENIS BROWNE. The part that I have taken in discussion of the Catholic question in this House, and my connection with persons of that sect in my own country, makes it, as I think, incumbent on me to express my warmest thanks, and my highest approbation of that part of his Excellency's speech that recommends the case of the Roman Catholics of Ireland to the consideration of its parliament.—I trust the Catholics will not forget the parliamentary persecutions against them which have been unremitting since the revolution, have ceased from the commencement of the reign of George the third, that he was the first prince that ventured to recommend their loyalty and grievances to the consideration of their countrymen, I trust they will be the best prop of his crown—the best support of the constitution: if ever they should for a moment forget what they owe to their beneficent sovereign, I will be ashamed of what now is my pride and my boast—my attachment to them.—Tied to them by every principle of hereditary and personal regard, I pledge myself to them, to this House, and to the world, that my exertions for their cause shall cease only with their perfect liberation from the disgraceful state of civil disability in which they stand. I have with some trouble and care prepared a bill for this purpose: to rescue my friends from slavery, to purify the law from absurdity, is warmly my wish—but it is a situation to which my wishes alone entitle me. His Majesty's ministers in this country will, I suppose, bring forward his Majesty's measure before parliament. I am perfectly satisfied to consign it to their care, and shall be content to give them my zealous support, if the bill brought forward be what I think it ought to be for the Catholics, I will use my best endeavours with them to prevent their embar-

passing the measure by unreasonable demands. If, contrary to my expectations, it should be a half measure for them, I will endeavour to amend it.

Sir, there are matters that have been touched on by the right honourable gentleman under me, that also call for an avowal of the principle of every man that is concerned in the state. I am attached to the constitution of this country, as established at the revolution—I am averse to every society and person who shall attempt to subvert it—I disapprove of the conduct of societies of this country, who have presumed to hold political correspondence with foreign powers—that openly communicate with France—that make the proceedings of that unfortunate and infatuated country the theme of their praise—that rejoice in successes that give impunity to ruffians, and authorized them to drag to their bar an unfortunate prince, against whom blood-thirsty judges have not been able to bring forward a single charge that in a land of justice and of freedom, could subject him to a fine of ten pounds—their system is the reverse of civil liberty. Were I obliged to make a choice between being a member of a country in which the most absolute monarchical government was established, and that land of extensive freedom, that is so much admired by those societies, I should not hesitate to prefer the former. I highly approve of the conduct of his Majesty's ministers in England, in the exertions they have made to keep from that country the blessings of French fraternity; and I hope when similar measures become necessary here, that all attachments and prejudices of party will cease, and that the voice of this country will be unanimous as that of England in the rejection of those principles.

Mr. HOBART. Although the right honourable gentleman has been pleased to express in strong terms his disapprobation of the conduct of this House, I should not think it respectful to the gentlemen who compose it for me to enter into their justification. With regard to that part of his speech which concerns me personally, and particularly with regard to my treatment of the Catholics, I must observe that he has mentioned that the impression he received was conveyed to him from the publication of the debates in William-street.—

[Mr. GRATTAN—(interrupting)—I did not say he had done so, but that they accused him of having done so; for I was not a judge of the fact, though they were of the expression.]

I am happy [resumed Mr. Hobart] that the right honourable gentleman has called upon me, as it affords me an opportunity of explaining my conduct with regard to the Catholics, and I trust the gentlemen of this House will do me the justice to believe that I am incapable of treating any description of his Majesty's sub-

jects with disrespect.—When the Catholics in the session of 1790, applied to me on the subject of the petition, they desired to have it supported in parliament, I certainly gave them no encouragement, because I did not consider myself warranted in so doing, but if my declining to hold out expectations of relief at that time was any proof of disrespect, I am inclined to believe that the right honourable gentleman was equally guilty of it; and I know that although they applied to many other members of this House to present their petition, not one was found who would comply with their wishes. Subsequent to this period, a relaxation of the popery laws passed in Great Britain, and expectations were then entertained, that similar measures might be adopted here, with that view I had communications with several of the Catholics, and I did then recommend it most strenuously to them to adopt a conciliating line of conduct, as the only ground upon which they could hope for indulgence from parliament. Whether this advice was likely to forward their objects, I leave to the House to judge; but I must explicitly say, that the opinion I gave was not to any particular description of the Catholics, but to all, as I could prove to the right honourable gentleman, by naming them to him—which I was ready to do. Was this conduct pursued by me with a desire to sow discontent? No—it was with the best intentions towards their interests.—What dispatches the right honourable gentleman may allude to, I cannot possibly know; nor shall I act so inconsistently with my duty as to discuss the Lord Lieutenant's dispatches here—but I may venture to say, that if he had last year represented to the British ministers that the House of Commons would not then grant the elective franchise, he would not have made a false representation. As to the grand juries, I am not to defend the conduct of others; but I must say, after what has fallen from the right honourable gentleman, with respect to the manifesto of the metropolis, that I approved of it as little as he seems to have done.—In reply to the charge of our not having called the parliament at an early period, when that measure had been resorted to by Great Britain, I must state to the right honourable gentleman, that having called out a part of the militia at an unusual season, the parliament was bound to meet under the statute, in fourteen days. Had parliament been summoned here at a shorter notice than twenty-five days, I believe it would have given rise to much disapprobation.—As to French emissaries, I do not believe there are any here at present, although their doctrines have been industriously disseminated, and I should apprehend that the aliens bill may drive many of them to this country.

Before the embargo was laid, parliament had been called, therefore the right honourable gentleman's charge upon that head is

removed. The privy council sat twice upon the subject; the first time in consequence of applications from merchants of Cork and Waterford, declaring an apprehension of scarcity; upon examining into the fact, it was found that there was no cause to apprehend scarcity, consequently no embargo was laid; but in a fortnight after, advice from the English ministers, whose situations give them the best opportunities of judging of the imperial concerns of the empire, declared the probability of a French war, and suggested the expediency of this measure—another cause of complaint against ministers is, that when Mr. Edward Byrne summoned his convention, they did not summon parliament. I only appeal to gentlemen whether they would have thought it decent in ministers to have called parliament together at an unusual period for such a cause? As to the amendment, he would say, that from all that part which affords expressions of gratitude and attachment to the king, it would ill become him to dissent; but the Roman Catholic question being an object of great importance, he never would be inclined to take upon a sudden any determination relative to it.—Let it be well weighed, and he had no doubt that the decision which would follow would be such as so great and important a subject required, and conformable to the general interests of the kingdom.

Mr. HARDY said, though he had not the honour of a private acquaintance with the right hon. gentleman [Mr. Hobart] from what he had observed from him in public, he was convinced that it was impossible he should treat any man with ill-manners.

He acknowledged he had never received greater pleasure in his life than in hearing that the Lord Lieutenant had it in charge to recommend to parliament the consideration of the case of the Roman Catholics. A gentleman had said, “the question respecting that class of subjects ought to be considered with the coolness of statesmen, not with the warmth of partizans”—most true it ought. He hoped no set of men were disposed to run a race for the favour of the Roman Catholics; that people would certainly look with gratitude to those who should distinguish themselves in their behalf; but every wise and honest statesman would endeavour to convert this gratitude into sentiments of attachment and regard for the constitution; and thus, if any of the people have been corrupted by incendiaries, or had adopted French principles, take the certain way to disappoint them.

He did not think that a few seditious men in this country, though writing on forever, could have excited a general ferment, if there was not some other latent cause co-operating with them: the writings of Rousseau and Marmontelle could never have brought about a revolution in France, if that kingdom had had a sound constitution.—Let ministers reflect on this;—amend the

abuses that have found way into ours, and then they need not fear incendiaries.

DoCTOR DUIGENAN.—I cannot agree to the amendment proposed by the right hon. gentleman, because such an amendment is evidently calculated to entrap this House into the expression of a sort of approbation of the claims of the Roman Catholics, contained in their petition to the throne, and thereby artfully to obtain a sort of pre-judgment in favour of the Catholic question by surprise, before it comes regularly to be considered and debated in the House. No man in this House has a higher respect for the recommendation of our gracious monarch than I have, or will take more pains seriously to consider the Catholic question; but I have read in the public prints a copy of a Catholic petition presented to the throne; and if such be a true copy, I pledge myself to this House, to demonstrate that one-third of it is made up of gross misrepresentation, and another third of it of rank and notorious falsehood: and if my most gracious sovereign has been misled by the contents of such a petition, into an opinion too favourable to the interests and views of the Roman Catholics of this nation, it shall be my business, when the question comes regularly to be debated in this House, to expose the misrepresentation and falsehood of this production to his Majesty's ministers, and to the nation in general; and to convince the Roman Catholics of the country, that fair, honest and true representations of their situation, will be hereafter more beneficial to them; and as the recommendation of his Majesty to this House, respecting the Roman Catholics, may have been procured by fraud and imposition, (as for the reasons aforesaid I much suspect) I shall take care to withhold my assent from this amendment, or from any other amendment which may tend to express any opinion on the Catholic question, till that business is brought regularly to be debated and considered in this House.

Mr. EGAN set out with declaring, that he was ready to support his sovereign and the constitution with his life and fortune, and to give to all his fellow-subjects a participation in the blessings of liberty; so far he was ready to coincide with the address; but he could not, without forfeiting his consistency, agree to the paragraph which thanks his Majesty for continuing the Earl of Westmorland in the government of this country. He then proceeded to assign his reasons: and in the course of his speech, being supposed to allude to a noble and revered personage at the head of a great department, he was several times called to order.

Col. BLAQUIERE.—Every man has, I believe, here a right to represent any matter that may appear to him as a tendency to

disturb the peace of this House; and I must confess, that in my mind, I think there is great reason to apprehend it. I read a printed paper about a fortnight or three weeks ago, and I have read it since stated by the friends of the Roman Catholics, which strikes me to be a declaration to the approach of a civil bloodshed betwixt the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, and I think the paper plainly indicates my assertions, and I beg leave to repeat a part of this resolution; but first I must say, that this paper writing was a resolution from a society composed of some of the first men in this kingdom, I could not help observing with some surprise, that I read the name of a personage of the highest quality to have presided on that day at the meeting, a personage eminent for his candour, and beloved by all for his affability. However, give me leave now to repeat the very words stated in that paper:

“We exult to live in a country, where the voice of the people once plainly and decidedly uttered is a thunder which no government dares resist, and before which all corruption must disperse; the tumult of intemperance may be derided and subdued by the feeblest ministers, but it is not within the limits of ministerial daring to resist the firm demands of the people.”

Is this language, Sir, to be used to the council of the nation? Is it to be intimidated? Is it to be forced to comply with measures that may be thought to endanger the constitution? Such language, sure, can but be construed as a declaration of domestic war, and as the forerunner of violent disorder?—Would it not have been time enough for such a society to have shewn their disapprobation, when their requests had been refused? Is this like the language which an honorable and learned member stated to the House at the close of the last session, that three millions of people came in an humble and most humiliating manner to ask relief for their grievances, and that the decision of this House, be what it would, should be received by the Catholics most thankfully and gratefully? Now, Sir, I shall only beg leave to add, that I do not think that there is a man on this side of the House, nor on the other, but from that declaration has reason to be alarmed, and that in the most serious manner. Sir, if this House is to be treated with such indignity, in my humble opinion, there must be an end to parliaments.

Mr. CONOLLY rose, and said, he thought the gentleman extremely out of order—as to the noble peer to whom he alluded, though he, Mr. Conolly, differed with him on political grounds, yet he had always heard that in his judicial capacity, he stood pure and unimpeachable, that his conduct as a judge was deemed a credit and a blessing to the nation, and that his integrity, wisdom, and ability manifested, since he held the seals, had proved of the greatest public advantage.

Sir LAWRENCE PARSONS said, if any man has been criminal in a judicial capacity, he is amenable to the law, and ought to be punished, but the noble person in question, has ever been spoken of by the public voice, in the highest terms of approbation and respect.

Mr. EGAN rose again, and said, he did not allude to the noble person in his judicial capacity, and was proceeding, when the Speaker again called him to order: he then confined himself to the conduct of Lord Westmorland's government, which he much condemned; and after one interruption more, which was a call to order from the Speaker, for alluding to the people in the gallery, he concluded his speech, by declaring he supported Mr. Grattan's amendment.

Mr. BARRINGTON said, he was roused by the report of a political blunderbuss on the other side of the House, which he was happy to find (though obviously overcharged) had been snapped with so little judgment as to end only in explosion. He ridiculed in the strongest terms the violence and vociferation of an hon. member whom he compared to a thunder cloud bursting from its own plenitude, and at once discharging its fire and its moisture. He then entered at large into the designs of gentlemen who endeavoured to render Government most odious and suspected at the very moment that it had proposed to the House the full consideration of the Roman Catholic question. Gentlemen by that line of conduct, endeavoured to wrest from Government the popularity of the measure, and place it to their own account—it was through Government that the relaxations of the last sessions to the Roman Catholics were adopted—it was through Government (the constitutional mouth-piece of the crown) that the farther consideration of their case is this session to arise. He said he would not be weak enough to argue that abuses might not have crept into the government of this country; on the contrary, he believed there had, but this was not the time to bring disrepute on the constituted authorities of the country; when gentlemen used that language, it was not the insignificance of the spark which was to be dreaded, but the inflammability of the matter which surrounds it;—the time of investigation should be a time of tranquility, when the passions of the people were at rest, and the public mind could see without prejudice, and investigate without ferment. He said, the hon. member had told them the character of a viceroy, who he would wish to see govern this country; he would now tell the House the character of a patriot whom the people might trust—they might trust a man whose property and family gave him a stake in the country—whose integrity raised him beyond the reach of venality—whose moderation gave him

weight—whose manners gained him attention, and who was only connected with party as far as the circumstances of the times and the real interest of the country permitted, such a man [Mr. O'Neill] had opened the debate, such a man stood as an unattainable example to the honourable member. He was particularly severe on the Society of United Irishmen, and ludicrously observed of the many accoucheurs who composed a great proportion of that society, that he supposed they only intended to carry the principle of their trade into more general reputation, and wish to be considered politically as well as physically the deliverers of the country—He observed that an honourable member [Mr. Egan] had remembered every part of his speech extremely well, except that part which related to the point in question, and humourously compared the honourable member to one of the seven wonders of the world, the Colossus of Rhodes, which keeps a foot firm on each bank, but very wisely lets the irresistible current flow untouched between them. Mr. Barrington, then concluded, by declaring his most sincere attachment to the true interests of Ireland, the preservation of its peace, and the complete protection of its constitution; he proved himself the firm friend of every measure, that could (without weakening or involving the antient branches of the legislature) tend to tranquillise the minds of the people; and to give security and happiness to his native country; he made many pointed retorts on the sarcasms thrown out against Lord Westmorland, and finally congratulated the House on the approaching dissipation of prejudice and the union of interest, so essential to the preservation of the country.

Mr. BUSHE approved of the establishment of a militia as a wise measure. He would say if any objected to it, as a king of Syracuse did, that he would have them when they were armed.—He hoped that all sides of the House would contribute in strengthening the hands of the executive government, and cautioned opposition against throwing out sentiments tending to degrade parliament, as it was very difficult to separate a hatred of governors from a hatred of the constitution.

He then came to look at their situation that night—and were there wisdom, he said, in their councils, they might arrive at greater prosperity than ever they had yet done. Great-Britain was on the eve of entering into a war of the whole empire—Ireland was the only spot which was vulnerable, for France could not send her forces to the East or West-Indies. We had then to support a war with a country, whose object was to destroy all established governments, who renounced all ideas of conquest, and then embraced conquest on the most general scale, had been guilty of breaches of faith to bring it about, and who had set

the poor against the rich, and the strong against the weak. This was not a time for bickerings. He recommended such conduct as would be likely to restore confidence, and approved of the amendment, but wished it to be postponed to the following night.

Mr. Serjeant DUQUERY.—I concur with the right honourable gentleman who spoke last, that we are called together at a period which requires, in a peculiar degree, the wisdom and the exertion of parliament. The situation of public affairs will justify any member for trespassing a few moments on the attention of the House. Indeed I should imagine, that the more generally and more decidedly we expressed our sentiments at the opening of this important session, the more service we are likely to do: the eyes of surrounding nations are fixed on the conduct of the British empire, and although Great Britain must occupy much the greater part of their attention, yet the deliberations of this parliament will carry a degree of respect and regard proportioned to our weight in the scale of the empire. In fact, at this juncture, the sentiments of the representative assembly of any free state must carry some consequence along with them; and I hope that I may be permitted to consider this House as in the number of free assemblies. It is to the two houses of parliament, as the great council of the nation, that the sovereign has a right to resort for assistance and advice in times of difficulty and of danger, and it is the province and duty of parliament to give to the sovereign the most steady and powerful aid, and to offer him their most mature and affectionate counsel; this service I trust we shall render to his majesty, without being awed by the turbulent on one hand, or influenced by our own private interests on the other. The conduct of Administration in both countries indicates, at least, an alarm in the minds of those who should best know our situation; it marks an apprehension of danger, either from without or from within, or probably from both. At such a juncture it will be admitted, that Ireland stands in need of a parliament, who can shew themselves possessed of firmness and temper, whose proceedings shall exhibit proofs to the nation of their integrity and their energy. We are now either actually embarked in, or on the eve of a war with France, we have always found France a formidable enemy; we found her formidable in a state of slavery, we cannot expect to find her less powerful in what she conceives at least to be a state of freedom; yet, since the honour and safety of the empire call for such a war, let us enter on it boldly and unanimously; Great Britain shall see that she is certain of receiving from Ireland, that assistance which she never refused in the time of danger. Expedients which argue no liberality on one side, and produces no gratitude on the other.

But there is one other cause of discontent which deeply disgusts the public mind, and has diffused itself through the kingdom. It has been said, and is believed, that administration after administration has promised œconomy and practised profusion, that the public money has been lavished, and that the taxes which are wrung from the hand of labour, are bestowed upon the indolent and the wealthy; accusations have even been spread every where through the realm, that attempts have been made to purchase, with the public money, the representatives to sell their constituents, and that we, who vote the taxes, have been invited to share in the spoil. War with France, and disquietude at home; what belief more fatal could be poured into the public mind, than, that we, the guardians of the people, could be bought to betray them? If France, our artful enemy, was to send her intriguing emissaries into this country, (as she will try to do, and perhaps has done,) can they scatter a more fatal fire-brand through the nation, than to persuade the people that their representatives could sacrifice them to their own private interest. If that charge be unfounded, banish the disgraceful calumny from the public mind, shew ourselves an honest House of Commons, and we shall do more to calm the people and deter our enemies, than by any vote of credit we may pass. Look into the expenditure of the public money, wherever retrenchment can be adopted with safety, let it immediately take place. I wish not for any attack or crimination upon ministers; all my learning, all my partialities, are in favour of government; I wish only to look to future expenditure, and to guard the sinews of war with diligence; perhaps additional taxes may not be wanting at this moment; but who will venture to tell us that we shall conquer our enemies without heavy additional taxes? If we must bend under the weight of burdens, let us at least have the consolation of reflecting that we bear them for the honour of the nation and the safety of the empire, and not for any unnecessary or unworthy purposes. I say then, if public profusion is one of the great causes of general discontent, public œconomy is the measure to remove that source of disquietude from the minds of the people. There is another subject worthy of our consideration; take from the hovel of the wretched the hand of the tax-gatherer, and let not the miserable peasant be distrained, of perhaps the last utensil in his dwelling, for the hearth on which he dresses his scanty meal; place your taxes upon the competent and the affluent, but let misery alone; taxes, if necessary, which Ireland gave in the days of poverty and oppression, and which she will now give more proudly and more powerfully in a state of independence and of increasing wealth. His majesty shall have the satisfaction of seeing that his throne is not encircled by subjects of more unshaken loyalty, or more tried valour, than his

people of Ireland. But with whatever ardour we may engage in this war, let us take care that our exertions abroad are supported and enforced by the prudence of our measures at home. The speech of his Excellency informed us, that discontents are at this moment agitating the public mind to a considerable degree; this calls upon us to examine into the causes of those discontents; should they appear utterly unfounded; should they be only the effusions of seditious spirits who wish to overturn the constitution, and disturb our internal tranquillity, it is our duty to strengthen, by every means in our power, the hands of government, and to enable administration to teach the instigators to anarchy and confusion, that this is not the country in which they can prosper. They may look for proselytes in the regions of despotism, but in a land of freedom, with men who have a constitution, with men who have religion, they must not set up new modes of government or of faith. This is the conduct which parliament, I conceive, ought to observe with respect to those unquiet beings, who would destroy a constitution which they could never form, and blast the peace which they can never enjoy. But are there any real causes of discontent existing within this kingdom? if there are grievances unredressed; if there are any benefits withheld from the people of this country which ought to be granted them; let us redress those grievances, and endeavour to procure those benefits for them. Thus shall we remove the discontents by abolishing the cause. Here parliament should take a different course, and shew its temper, its patience, and its liberality; the seditious should be punished, and the sufferer should be relieved. Let us for ever abandon that destructive line of policy which would prompt us to reject the respectful petition of our fellow-subjects, or treat the prayer of the suppliant with contempt, a conduct I should have resisted, had I not been prevented from attending my duty in parliament, by long and severe illness, during the whole of the last session. The oppressed should know, in whatever quarter of the realm they may reside, to whatever class or description they may belong, that the hearts of parliament are open to their complaints and sufferings. The parliament has it in their power to make atonement for the error and oppression of those which have gone before them, by calling our Roman Catholic brethren within the pale of the constitution, and raising them to the dignity of freemen. Let us prove to our Catholic brethren that we have minds superior to bigotry, and that whatever may be the extent of their sufferings, our justice is equal to their wrongs. This is one measure in which we can remove a great portion of the public discontent. Let us enter upon it immediately, upon a large and extensive scale, suited to the dignity of the legislature, and the importance of the subject, and let us no longer treat this

great question with paltry lenitives or temporary expedients; in the place of the poor, tax your wealthy absentees, men fed by our industry, draining our substance, and degrading our country; let our taxes be laid upon the proper subjects of taxation, and applied solely to the honest purposes of the state. That measure will go a great way to remove public discontent. I have heard it said by a distinguished character, speaking of Great-Britain and Ireland, "equal dangers and equal benefits, let Ireland share in all the perils of England, and in all the blessings she enjoys;" and so she ought.—There is no one civil or political benefit whatever possessed by England, that should be denied to Ireland. Our constitution should certainly be rendered equal to that of Great Britain, in all its properties, its privileges and protection. We must be their equals in misfortune; why should we be their inferiors in happiness. Against the same enemy are the British and the Irish soldiers going now to march; upon the same field must they conquer or perish; there is no distinction in the day of battle and there should be none in the hour of peace; adopt every good and salutary law, which shall place the constitution of this country on the same level with that of Great Britain, upon what principle of sound policy, of common justice, or at this moment upon what principle of gratitude is it, that the administration of this country can resist any constitutional improvement that shall be desired. Believe me the situation of the empire, and the temper of the times are but ill suited to the refusal of just and moderate demands. These are the general outlines of the measures, which occurred to me as proper to be pursued by parliament to give content to this country. Shall such be the measures of our Administration? If they are to be the measures of Administration, I shall remain happy and even honoured by this course as long as they please to permit me to continue in my present station, and I shall esteem it a fortunate circumstance in my life to have a connection with ministers of the crown that can act so wisely, and so well for the people. Are the servants of administration to be directed to resist these measures, there will be then but one honourable line of conduct left to me, to resign my office, and espouse the cause of the people; that office which was conferred without solicitation, shall be returned without murmurs, ever with thankfulness to them who bestowed upon me a place of considerable precedence in a profession where precedence is of value; that being done, my connexion with administration is at an end, and I must stand here for a moment feeble and alone; but if there be a body of men in this House, as I firmly believe there is, who wish to render service to this country, without any interested motives at the bottom, will they permit me to mingle in their ranks, become a partner in their labours, and share with them the heart-felt satisfaction of doing justice to

a brave, a loyal, and I fear an injured people. Let not the men who call for such measures as these be considered as wishing to weaken the hands of government. No; it is the government which resists such measures, which weakens itself. He is the true friend of government, who would remove every cause of discontent from the minds of the people; he is only a friend to his office and to himself, who to retain that office, would lull the ministers in security, and leave the state in danger. Do you conceive that any enemy will venture to assail our country, if on every coast we can present to them the front of a bold and united nation. I do believe it to be in the power of this House to give ample satisfaction to the people of Ireland, to redress all their wrongs, and to gratify all their just desires, for the bulk of this nation is not unreasonable or seditious, they love their king, admire their constitution, and wish only to purify and preserve it. Is that wish seditious, is that demand unreasonable? we know, we feel that it is not; but let us break the chains by which prejudice and self-interest had fettered down our minds; much good may be done in the course of the present session, more perhaps in the next; and before this parliament shall arrive at its dissolution, you shall behold Ireland taking her place in the great rank of nations, and in every conflict with our enemies, you shall see the arm of the sovereign nerved with the strength of his people.

Mr. GRATTAN professed, that his idea of the amendment was, to make the Roman Catholics fully sensible of the benefits for which they were indebted to his Majesty, and of their indelible obligations to the House of Brunswick.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose last in the debate; he said, an address, expressive of loyalty to the sovereign, and unshaken attachment to the constitution, should ever have, let who would be in or out of power, his cordial support; he did not, however, consider that in voting for the address, any member was bound to any particular measure, recommended from the throne; and he considered himself free, as to that momentous question relating to the Roman Catholics; having mentioned that subject, he said, his feelings would not allow him to hear the obloquy cast upon Administration for their conduct on that question, in the last session, without taking his share of the censure; he had voted with them, he knew nothing of ministers but in that House; and on that question it was fair to say, they divided with the greatest majority perhaps ever known, composed of men the first in character, property, and talents, in that House. At this time, he wished the address to have general support; he wished the House to act as one party, in one common cause, and that the enemies

of the constitution, French friends, and French advocates, might learn, that they derived no advantage, either from the weakness of Administration, or the abilities of Opposition. At this time, he considered it to be the duty of every man, having a share in the sacred trust—the guardianship of his country—to come forward, however few or weak his talents, and avow his public principles: would the House allow him, acting under the purest advice, and with the purest intentions to state his; his principles were from the clearest conviction of his judgment—ante-republican; and with contempt and detestation, of all wild and wicked levellers of order, and libellers of our emphatically happy constitution, he would support it at the hazard of his life, as it existed in the three estates, where each was a necessary controul on each, and each a vital of the other two. He spoke from the best authorities who had written on government, that human wisdom never did, or ever could form for human society, a system more compleat, or in which real liberty and true equality were more perfectly enjoyed: in support of such a system, the House would unquestionably have but one opinion, and be one party. It was observed by an ingenious writer, that in England there were two parties; they were rivals, they hated each other but loved the same mistress—the constitution; in Ireland (says Mr. Sheridan) there are two parties, he would not say we hate each other, or that we would in like manner, or with like views, look on the same mistress; but of this he was certain, that if any power, party, or faction, endeavoured to force or wound that mistress, we should unite against the desperate and profligate enemy of all order, decency, and decorum. Why were incendiaries at work to raise a jealousy in the people against the constitution? A right honourable gentleman [Mr. Grattan] seemed to impute the public discord to Administration; he was clear it was also imputable to Paine's pamphlet, and the French revolution: of Paine, he would only say, he might be a man of integrity, or he might be a fellow who would “steal a diadem off the shelf, and put it in his pocket;” his work might be a work of genius, but it was a work of mischief: he appears to have viewed our constitution as the Devil did Paradise when he talked to Eve (perhaps) on the Rights of Woman. With respect to the French revolution, the overthrow of despotism, was to every honest man an object of admiration; but how, or why, should it be with us an object for imitation? The poorest peasant of the poorest soil in this kingdom enjoyed more liberty than the Prince of Conde possessed under the French monarchy; he enjoys more than his own prince, for the heir apparent submits for the public good, to restrictions by which the subject is not bound. Was the subsequent conduct of France an object of either admiration or imitation? it was an overthrow of theories, a confusion

of principles, a frantic and impracticable pursuit: were we to exchange the blessings we enjoy for French faith, French fraternity, and French embrace? Should we "our fair mountain leave, to feed and batten on a moor?" And yet there were men who did admire, and who would imitate; it was in vain to deny it, it was in vain to say they had only constitutional objects in view, else why their unworthy celebrations? their pitiful subscriptions? their indecent and illegal dissemination of libels on the three estates? their use and abuse of the word equality? their contemptible devices, their harp without a crown?—It was but a few years since it was the pride, the glory, and the claim of Ireland to have a crown of her own:—he was aware that what he said might not at this day be very popular; proud in the feeling of his own integrity, and proud indeed of the manner in which he became a member of that House; he was indifferent to any consideration but that of his duty; he had more than once seen popularity forsake the integrity that had cherished it, and with a vicious taste, attach itself to new exertion, untried merits, and little expectation. In his zeal for the constitution, he was far from saying that abuses did not exist, and that amendments were not wanting; but he would have every improvement suited to the fabric—he would not put a Gothic arch on Corinthian pillars—he would not reverse the emblem of stability, a pyramid—he would not place the point upon the ground. He again expressed his hope of unanimity, confident that it would have considerable effect on the country.

Mr. GRATTAN withdrew his amendment until the report should be made, and the address was committed.

The Hon. Mr. PERY rose to move an address to his excellency the Lord Lieutenant. The situation of this country had been rendered critical by the tenets which had found their way into it; after having laid waste a great part of Europe. The establishment of a militia therefore merited attention; he was sure that it was a measure to which no unpopularity could be attached. When the patriots in England succeeded in establishing a militia, they looked upon it as one of the greatest victims to liberty that could be gained. He was glad that it took away all excuse to armed associations from forming, who under the pretence of protecting the country might accomplish other purposes.

Mr. WOLFE [of Newlands] seconded the motion. The attention of his excellency to this country was conspicuous. The rapid progress it had made for the past was the best pledge for its prosperity under his government in future. He was happy that his exertions had succeeded in suppressing the rising of seditious spirits in this metropolis.

The address was then committed.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 1793.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD presented accounts of the exports and imports into Ireland for one year, ending 25th March, 1792.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL presented "a bill for indemnifying such persons as have acted for the service of the public, in advising and carrying into execution two proclamations of the Lord Lieutenant and Council of this kingdom, bearing date the 26th day of December, 1792, and for establishing certain bonds therein mentioned."

It was read a first time.

Mr. GRATTAN moved, that the following amendment be made in the address, after the word "constitution," in the ninth paragraph:

"We admire the wisdom which at so critical a season has prompted your Majesty to come forward to take a leading part in healing the political dissensions of your people on account of religion. We shall take into our immediate consideration the subject graciously recommended from the throne; and at a time when doctrines pernicious to freedom and dangerous to monarchical government are propagated in foreign countries, we shall not fail to impress your Majesty's Catholic subjects with a sense of the singular and eternal obligation they owe to the throne and to your Majesty's royal person and family."

Mr. CONOLLY said, that during thirty-three years he had the honour of sitting in parliament, he could not recollect a moment so awful as the present. The expences, the debt of the country was great, and the corruption of the Administration proportioned to both. He had always been attached to the British constitution; and it had been the object of his whole political life to procure for the people of Ireland the full advantages of that constitution. He adored that constitution; and while there was a drop of blood in his veins, he would stand by it, and he felt this attachment to the constitution the stronger, because he knew it carried in its vitals an antidote to any poison that could be brought against it—particularly against the poison of corruption, of which the operation had been so strong as nearly to endanger its existence, not only here, but in Great Britain. Had the constitution been worked as it ought, if he might use that phrase, there would have been no need for those apprehensions of seditious designs expressed in the speech; there would have been no need to fear either Jacobines or Levellers. A good constitution, like an honest man, would not have feared the attack of

any enemy. The men entrusted with Irish affairs, had dipped very deeply in corruption; he was ready, however, to acknowledge, they had some excuse to plead for their conduct.—Before their accession to the ministry, corruption had taken deep root; this, though it did not justify, certainly tended to extenuate the excesses which they had been guilty of in this instance. Whatever their conduct might have been, if the sword of the country was now to be drawn, he would put his hand to it, even though the war in which she was about to engage to support the sister country, was one of the most incomprehensible that had ever been heard of. It had always been a favourite object with him to support an union between the two countries, and it was so, because he was always a devoted friend to a Protestant government in this country, the best support of which he thought was that union. Thus, in the American war, though that war was founded in the corruption of the times, every man wishing to see the expences of the state paid by any others than himself, yet, when that war was declared, he gave his concurrence. He would do so now, from the same principle, though perhaps he equally disapproved of the impending war.

It was recommended from the throne, that the House should treat their Catholic brethren with liberality. He had ever given his consent to every measure that had been proposed for their relief; he would now use the liberality which the speech from the throne recommended: But he would agree in participating with the Catholics, the whole constitution, only provided they would join hand in hand with their Protestant brethren, and lay the axe to the root of corruption. But if the present system of corruption should be continued as at present, and if the Catholics were admitted into the constitution, it would be only making bad worse—it would be only throwing new difficulties and new expence in the way of members of parliament, which they certainly would not be at the loss of.

Gentlemen in that House would not take trouble, or be at expence for nothing. Every man is worthy his hire, from the chairman to the member of parliament. If he be obliged to expend much in securing his seat, he will naturally go to that shop which will give him most encouragement—where he will be likely to be refunded not only his principal, but interest also. See, said he, how the evil will work. The poor man who gets an aching head at the canvass, and a broken one at the election, may probably get a little money; but the member who pays it him, will call on the manager of this House to be repaid—the manager goes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he must levy new taxes! and thus by extending the elective franchise you will extend the sphere of corruption, and add to the poverty of your country! The corruption of which he spoke had often made

him wish to be called to the bar of the House, and expelled from a society which he could not consider in the light he would wish.

As to the address, every part of it had his most hearty concurrence, except one, and that was the paragraph which thanked his Majesty for continuing the Earl of Westmorland in the government of this kingdom. During the administration of that nobleman every salutary measure that had been proposed, for the good of the people, had been contemptuously rejected; the expences of government had increased, and the pension list had been augmented. He had very great affection for Lord Westmorland, in his private capacity; but, for the good of the country, he must wish him out of it.

Sir JOHN PARNELL denied that the expences of the government were increased, unless in consequence of measures adopted by that House. He declaimed against the absurdity of men professing themselves friends to the constitution, and, at the same time, distinguishing between the king and the parliament. Government, he said, had been made unpopular by the abilities and character of the gentlemen in opposition; they had charged administration with making corruption their principle, and their boast. He would be ashamed if it were either the one or the other. But influence was connected with the British constitution, which gentlemen professed so much to admire; he, for his own part, was willing to appear at the bar of the public—but he hoped, when gentlemen accused them there, they would not be so general in their charges of corruption, but come to specific charges.

Mr. FORBES, after having expressed his approbation of the manly and decided manner in which his right honourable friend [Mr. Conolly] had spoken, said, that he should not have solicited the attention of gentlemen did not he consider it incumbent on every member, who had been in the habits of delivering his sentiments in that House, at a period so critical and important as the present, to declare explicitly the principles on which he acted, and the system of conduct which he was firmly determined at all hazards to pursue.—With respect to that part of the address, which adverted to his Majesty's recommendation of the Catholic claims to the consideration of Parliament, he wished that the acknowledgements to his Majesty for his gracious interposition had been conceived in terms more forcible, and adequate to the weight of obligation he had conferred on this nation; for certainly that interposition had prevented the dangerous consequences, which must otherwise have ensued from the temerity of the conduct of the ministers of the crown in Ireland on the subject of those claims, and he trusted that his right honourable friend

[Mr. Grattan] would persevere in urging an amendment to that clause.—He said that he approved most decidedly of the expressions of attachment to his Majesty's person and family; because he considered that family as principally instrumental in continuing and securing to the people of Great Britain the benefits of the revolution 1688; and he regarded the succession of the House of Brunswick to the throne of these kingdoms from the circumstances in which it originated, as intimately connected with and closely allied to the rights of the people.—He was attached to the form of the constitution, as consisting of King, Lords, and Commons; as the experience of England for a century had proved that no other system of government was so well calculated to secure the liberty and property of the subject, and to preserve the tranquillity of the country.—Neither in the histories of Greece or Rome, or in the theories on government, with which the continent daily teems, can we find a system in any degree comparable to the constitution of Great Britain, in its purity; and notwithstanding the decided preference given to a republic by philosophical and metaphysical politicians in France, he contended that they had not even suggested a system of government, which possessed such energy and solidity as can be produced by the unity and individuality of the executive power in England, accompanied by a decided responsibility of the servants of that power to a parliament of that country, wherein the people were fully, freely and equally represented. To that paragraph in the address, which contained thanks to his Majesty for continuing Lord Westmorland as lord lieutenant, he said he must give a positive negative.—He did not object to him as an individual, he flattered himself that the House would give him credit for possessing a mind superior to the floating scurrility of the day; he knew not any cause to disesteem his lordship in his private capacity; but he said, were he even connected by the strictest friendship or the nearest affinity with that nobleman, and were he honoured with the confidence of his sovereign, he should consider it, as an indispensable duty to declare to the king, as the clear conviction of his mind, that in order to insure tranquillity to this country and to extinguish public discontent, it was absolutely necessary that Lord Westmorland should cease to be chief governor of Ireland.—He said, as to the part of the address where the words "our excellent constitution," were inserted, he must dissent from such a description of the system of Irish government; in his opinion we had not any constitution, at least not one that was free; in England the people had a constitution round which they could rally; there at the revolution their rights and liberties were firmly established:—But he asked, have any of the provisions adopted at that period in England, to secure

a good government for the people and maintain the independence of parliament, been enacted by the legislature of this kingdom?—Not one. Have the measures devised for the better attainment of these objects, and included in the acts settling the crown of these realms on the present royal family, been resorted to by the parliament of Ireland?—Not one. Have the various acts for preserving and enforcing the principles of the revolution passed by the parliament of Great Britain since the accession of the House of Brunswick to the crown a place in our statute-book?—Not one. But the parliament of Ireland has passed an act similar to the stamp-act of England; it has passed acts similar to the excise-laws of England; it has passed a police-act—not similar to that in England, but to a bill, which was rejected by the British House of Commons in consequence of a petition of the corporation of London, praying to be rescued from the scourge of such a system; in a word, the ministers have selected from the English code, every thing which is favourable to the power of the crown, and scarce any thing which is friendly to the privilege of the people; therefore while he pledged himself to support the Government in the execution of the laws, in the preservation of the tranquillity of the country, in the maintenance of the stability of the throne, and in resisting the progress of the opinions of French politicians in this kingdom, he declared that he would not support the present constitution of the executive government of Ireland, because the constitution of a country could not with any propriety be denominated free, when the responsibility of the servants of the crown to the parliament of that country was not secured.—He would maintain the privileges of the House as long as he had the honour of being a member of it—he would yield obedience to the acts of the existing legislature, as was the duty of every subject—and he would co-operate with the Government in compelling those who refused such obedience, but he would never support the present model and frame of the House of Commons; on the contrary, he would endeavour to alter and reform it.

All distinctions and orders in the state have been confounded by the practices of the Irish government.—Have we not seen in effect the chief executive magistrate of the kingdom descend from his throne, and take his seat in the representative assembly of the nation, guarded and surrounded by his numerous band of gentlemen-pensioners, officers of the customs, the excise, searchers, packers, gaugers, barrack-masters, clerks, and the gentlemen of the Lord Lieutenant's family; armed with this phalanx of one hundred and ten, together with their satellites and dependants of those placemen and pensioners, the aspect of the first executive magistrate of the kingdom was so formidable that he excited apprehension, instead of attracting confidence. Do the

people wish to see their representatives, they must seek for them in the offices of the custom-house, the ordnance, the barracks, or castle, till four o'clock, when those offices empty their contents into the House of Commons; where, by the magic influence of the mace, these same revenue officers and their clerks are metamorphosed into free and independent representatives of a great nation, destined by the constitution to perform the solemn mockery of controuling the crown, whose wages they daily receive: either the British constitution is a wild and impracticable theory, or in an House of Commons, composed of the description of men, which he had stated, there is not any permanent security for the rights and liberties of the people; in a country thus circumstanced, the people are not possessed of political liberty. Compare the system of government in Ireland with the British constitution, or any free constitution which has existed, or does exist, and you must decide, without hesitation, that our system deserved any name but that of a free constitution. He said, that he never would give the lie to the whole of his parliamentary conduct by pronouncing such a system an excellent constitution; he considered those words in the address, as a call on this House by the servants of the crown in this kingdom, to enter into an association with them to perpetuate the abuses of their administration. But he trusted, that this call would not be obeyed. But it is said that the ministers of Ireland are alarmed. He observed that he was not surprised that they should be affected with a degree of panic when they viewed the situation to which they had reduced this country; a situation, which he must admit to be pregnant with danger; none could be more alarming than that of a country where the Administration had so conducted themselves as to deprive all orders in the state, and every branch of the legislature, of the confidence of the people; they had deprived the executive government of the confidence of the people by the corruption practised in its name, or under its sanction—the House of Lords by the sale of peerages—the House of Commons by the public avowal of governing it by a system of corruption, by an explicit and authoritative declaration, that it was to be purchased at the expence of half a million to the nation, and by audacious and insulting attempts to carry that menace into execution. He hoped that the right honourable bart. [the Chancellor of the Exchequer] would admit now that he had not declined his challenge to specify instances of the corruption of government.

He next adverted to an argument urged by gentlemen on the other side; had they perceived the dangerous consequences to which it led, he presumed they would not have resorted to it; it was this—though many with whom he acted had avowed their

attachment to monarchy, and the person of their sovereign, yet confidence was not to be placed in the sincerity of their professions, unless they supported the administration of Lord Westmorland; did these gentlemen intend to reduce the members of the House to this alternative—either subscribe to the system of abuses which prevail in the present Government, and which they have uniformly reprobated, or let them withdraw the aid which they affect to give to the throne, for ministers can consider them only as suspicious and equivocal friends to the monarch and his family. He was inclined to believe that his Majesty at such a period as the present would not be much disposed to stake the interests of himself and his family on the credit and character of Lord Westmorland's administration, especially when it was admitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that his excellency's government was unpopular.

But, he said, it may be asked, how will you act at a time and under circumstances, which you acknowledge to be so critical? He said he would answer, by declaring his determination to unite with men of all parties and descriptions in the House, to recover for the legislature the confidence of the people, and to give energy and effect to the executive government; and the best means to pursue for the attainment of these desirable objects, he said, was to redress the grievances of the people; if there were apprehensions from seditious men in this country, the legislature might easily discomfit them by removing all just cause of complaint. Then every honest man, every man of property, and every real friend to Ireland, will be attached to the government; and the seditious will be compelled either to retire, or to avow, by their conduct, the baseness of their motives, and the malignity of their intentions. Is it desirable to exclude the speculative systems of France? Give the people a determinate object on which the public mind may repose—limit their views to an assimilation of our constitution to that established in Great Britain, by the settlement at the revolution, and by the acts limiting the crown to the House of Hanover—insure a permanent good government to the country, by securing the responsibility of ministers to a parliament of Ireland, in which the people shall be so represented as to restore its just influence to the democratic part of the constitution; if there are any weak and ignorant persons, who are tossed and agitated in the sea of wild theories, with which the Continent is nearly overwhelmed, the legislature will by these measures erect a beacon, to which they may repair and establish a port, in which they may repose, secure in the enjoyment of the practical benefits of a good constitution, like that of Great Britain.

Though it is admitted, that discontent does exist in this kingdom, yet we are asked, has it any real foundation? For answer,

he appealed to the recollection of every person who heard him. What were the questions put by the people without doors to every member of the House? The first was this—Do we receive a consideration in point of benefit and advantage, in any degree equivalent to the enormous price which we pay for a government in this country? Must it not be answered—They do not. And the next—Is it not to the last degree absurd, that we should have at this day, the constitution only of an English garrison, and labour at the same time under all the expences of the establishments of a great nation? You must all admit, he said, that such a system is highly absurd and contradictory.

He next called the attention of the House to the paragraph in the address, which mentioned a militia, and said, that his mind was not prepared to decide on the expediency or necessity of such a measure; therefore he should not commit himself on that subject—at present he should only make two observations: One was, that experience had proved, that in England, at this day, there was scarce a shade of difference between a militia and a standing army. The other was, that in the event of the establishment of such a force, the utmost precaution must be used by parliament to prevent this institution from being converted into an instrument of patronage by the ministers of the crown. In England it was notorious, that if the lord lieutenant, who recommends all the officers for the militia, presumed to vote on any important question against Administration, he was as certainly deprived of his situation, as if he had been a member of the board, at which the minister presides.

He said, that he could not discover the reason and policy of a war with France; but if Great Britain shall be engaged in one, Ireland ought, and most certainly will unite with the sister kingdom in defence of the empire. But, as he feared that such a war would be carried on with no ordinary degree of hostility, he considered it as highly desirable that England should receive from this nation, a most cordial and effectual support: for insuring such support, it was necessary that the British and Irish nations should consider it as a common cause; no means could better contribute to excite such sentiments than the establishment of a community of constitutional privilege between the people of both countries.

Mr. D. BROWNE said, that he would vote for that part of the address, that thanked his Majesty for continuing Lord Westmorland in the government of this country, because he had supported his administration. He had done so without office, without hope of office, or ever intending to take office;—that he had done so on the principal that had directed the votes of other gentlemen in his situation.—He thought that in the clash of parties the people had generally little concern. That he con-

ceived that when trade, revenue, public and private credit had increased under the auspices of government; that no new taxes during the administration had been heard of; that no stretch of power had been made, injurious to the liberty or property of the subject; that it was a justification, and that he owed it as a duty to his constituents, to support a government under which the country was in a state of unexampled prosperity. The grievance of Ireland was the popery laws, by which the majority of its people are precluded from the enjoyment of those benefits, that he was happy to expect that the liberality of parliament would speedily do that injurious distinction away, and then that the situation of Ireland would be enviable indeed, enjoying the blessings of the British constitution without its debt or its taxes; all we shall want will be a sense of the happiness we shall enjoy, if we please it. He said, he never had taken office from the principle of always having it in his power to take that part in parliament, without restraint, that to his judgment, such as it was, seemed best; that in the Catholic question he had voted differently from government, and he would do so had the governor been his brother, and that his existence depended on his vote; but that he thought it a justice to government to state, that the Catholic cause was opposed in the last session by the prejudices and interests of their own countrymen, and not by government; if the minister of Ireland informed the British minister that he could not carry the wishes of the Catholics through the Irish parliament, he informed him rightly; if he stated that the Protestants opposed, almost universally, the Catholics getting the elective franchise, he informed him rightly; never, since the revolution, was there more prejudice against the Catholics, than in the last session of parliament; and I think it was a strong measure of government to carry through for them what they got; from whence arose the change in disposition, that displays itself now, simply from the change of the times from the last year to this;—from a rational Protestant seeing the impossibility of maintaining a monopoly opposite to reason, to the bulk of the people, and the inclination of the sovereign. With respect to corruption, he feared it was an old plant in this country, as a right honourable gentleman had described it;—that he feared it was an evil, that in governments such as ours, would be ever; that it went much farther than the walls of the Houses of Parliament, and that he feared, to cure it effectually, there must be a radical reform in the minds and manners of mankind.

Sir H. LANGRISHE said, he felt a satisfaction he was unable to express, in observing the ardour and unanimity with which the House of Commons of Ireland have expressed their concurrence with the gracious sentiments of his Majesty, conveyed to

them by the speech from the throne; that on this occasion habits of political dissention had yielded to the critical situation of the times, and every man who had spoken on either side of the House had alike urged the necessity of joining with one heart and one voice in declarations of loyalty to his Majesty, attachment to the monarchy, and detestation of those pernicious doctrines that have been propagated for the destruction of both; that, awakened to a sense of our common blessings and common dangers, we had joined in one opinion, that we should promote a general content and general co-operation. At the same time when he listened to the debate, he must say it appeared the most acrimonious unanimity he ever remembered. He could not easily reconcile the speeches of some gentlemen with the principles they professed, and which he was certain they entertained.

If gentlemen would give strength to his Majesty's government, as they profess, they can only do it by promoting union and contentment amongst his subjects; and do you imagine that union can be produced, when gentlemen of so high authority depreciate the government, and display to the people a series of their grievances? Do not the words they utter tend to defeat the purpose they profess? When they know that sedition is busied in poisoning the minds of the people with discontents, will not their speeches become auxiliary to this sedition, and so far defeat his Majesty's gracious intentions? A most respectable member [Mr. Forbes] who from his character and abilities must always have great weight, had conveyed an impression that he was certain could not be his intention. He said, "we had not the English constitution—that we had no constitution; that we had not adopted the laws which England thought necessary to secure her's; that we had adopted only stamp acts and excise laws." Does the honourable member forget our adoption of Magna Charta, the statute of treason and the declaration of rights, for protection of the rights and liberties of the subject? Is the Habeas Corpus act an excise law? Is the act for making the judges independent an excise law? Is the act for the limitation of parliament an excise law? Is the act for a national militia an excise law? What are the statutes that we have not adopted to confirm to us the perfection of the British constitution? Certain laws excluding from the legislature a certain denomination of pensioners and placemen; at the same time leaving the doors of parliament open to a much greater number of placemen than we have to enter into ours. What are the remedies the honourable member proposes for the evils of the times? A reform in parliament, and an union amongst the people. As to the first, he must say he knew there were several respectable gentlemen in this House, and out of it, who thought favourably of a parliamentary reform. He was sure their motives were pure, and the object the public

good ; but he knew there were many, who, under the pretext of reform, would conceal the purposes of subversion, and rob you of every thing that is dear to you, in order to improve your condition ; and he knew that no man ever pursued popular dominion, or popular commotion, without professing a public benefit. Public grievances and public reform have always been the common incantations for popular deception ; however, if he were to admit (which he verily did not believe) that our constitution was a subject of reform ; if he did not think (which he sincerely did think) that the evils attending a reform would be greater than the evils it affected to remove ; though he were to admit, for the sake of argument, that our happy constitution demanded a reform, yet no man could say this was the time to undertake the work. It is not the moment of phrenzy that can improve upon the wisdom of ages ; it is not the hand lifted up to overturn, that can accomplish the work of reform. You would not listen to the besieger of your castle, if he were to tell you he wished to demolish it, in order to rebuild it on a better plan ; you would laugh at the hypocrisy that told you his hostility was good-will, and that his victory would be a reformation ; you would rather feel an impulse to defend the fortrefs you had inherited from your ancestors, and rather endeavour to repulse your enemies than peruse their plans.

As to the last and best remedy, the uniting the people in the bonds of affection and common interest, by a wise and liberal consideration of our Catholic fellow subjects, that had always been an object near his heart, from the first moment in which he was able to form a political or moral opinion ; that though his efforts on that subject must have often yielded to the temper of those who were to decide on them, which must be the parliament of the country, he had never altered his opinion or wishes on the subject ; that when that subject came before the House, he should not fail, in compliance with his principles, his prudence and his feelings, to be their sincere and ardent advocate.

Sir H. CAVENDISH was greatly pleased that gentlemen now seemed sensible that we had a constitution, and hoped they would not suffer the House of Commons to be degraded. He thought that any man in the House who strove to bring it into disgrace—to degrade it in public estimation—acted in an unparliamentary manner. He knew that there were some real patriots on the other side of the House, but he thought that whatever their intentions might be, they were unjustifiable in endeavouring to bring the House into disrepute. He desired, therefore, he might hear no more of our having no constitution.—

Major DOYLE. As far, Sir, as this address is expressive of our loyalty and attachment to his Majesty, our affectionate re-

gard for our sister country, and our determination to preserve our happy constitution, of King, Lords, and Commons, so far has it my warmest and most decided approbation.—But honour, conscience, and consistency, forbid my agreeing to that part of it which returns thanks for the continuation of the present viceroy, who, but for the benign interposition of our gracious sovereign, had overturned the authority of government, and committed the peace and tranquillity of the country.—What is this but thanking my Lord Westmorland for doing that which we so justly thank his Majesty for counteracting.

Thus do the ministers, by presuming to shelter the vices and follies of their administration under the shade of the royal virtues, preclude the possibility of that unanimity in the address, which at all times is desirable, but at such a crisis as the present is indispensably necessary. For, Sir, the history of past ages has not produced a moment more pregnant with awful events, than that at which I have the honour to address you.—But amidst the many serious considerations which claim your attention, one, of predominant magnitude, irresistably demands exclusive preference.—What subject can stand in competition with the happiness of three-fourths of our countrymen?—Let me correct the expression; the happiness of the whole community is at stake. For it is the righteous doom of Heaven, that wheresoever man shall tyrannize over his brother, jealousy and fear of the oppressed blight every comfort of the oppressor. Nay, were it possible to smother apprehension, the heart becomes so vitiated by the habit of systematic injustice, that it loses its best capacity of enjoyment—I adjure you, therefore, by every tie that can influence mankind, by your humanity, by your justice, by your dearest interests, to weigh dispassionately the situation of the Catholics of Ireland, to which his Majesty particularly points your attention, with a benignity only to be equalled by the wisdom of the measure. The Catholic subjects, at least treble the number of all other descriptions united; their loyalty to their sovereign and fidelity to their fellow citizens, has for a century stood unimpeached, under circumstances the most trying, under opportunities the most inviting; yet these men still remain as aliens and almost unacknowledged in their native land.

In the maturity of merits so long proved, they have, at length, come forward to ask from you the rights of citizenship; an honourable gentleman has said, and even thought it an effort of liberality, that all privileges should be extended to them, consistent with the safety of other persuasions, and the Protestant ascendancy.—Sir, this is an invidious way of stating the question, and not less erroneous than invidious; no danger can exist from the Catholic participation of privileges; it would give them a civic interest, which must overbear every consideration flowing from the difference of religious opinion.

In truth, Sir, religion has nought to do with the question; happy would it be for the Catholics if their claims were to be tried by the criterion of our holy religion, which preaches to its followers the balmy spirit of philanthropy, and teaches us to "do unto all men as we would they should do unto us."

The question now presents itself too distinctly to admit of any glosses with which petty interest has heretofore distinguished its real quality; if there should be in this assembly any men, who, for a selfish advantage, have constantly obstructed the course of justice to the Catholics, to them I will say "you have shewn yourselves unequal to embrace even the starveling pigmy policy which you affected to admire." Had it been your object to maintain a disparity of condition between the Protestants and Catholics, you ought to have extended to the latter at least such a portion of advantages as would have been a decent price for their acquiescence and submission; but in the true spirit of haberdashers of justice, you have haggled in your bargain, until a generous pride has forced the Catholic to assert the integrity of his birthright, and demand the full extent of what is due to him as the citizen of a free community. It is said they have already received benefits from the legislature; I admit it, and I see that the country has improved accordingly. The prosperity of Ireland has proceeded *pari passu* with Catholic emancipation; convinced that the one cannot be perfect, without the completion of the other. I shall give my voice decidedly and unequivocally for the entire and total removal of every disqualification whatsoever, which now presses on the Catholic subject of Ireland. As a subject devoted to the interest of my sovereign, and attached by every tie of gratitude to his illustrious house, and as an Irishman anxious for the liberty of his country, I urge the only measure that can secure both;—*Nil æquum reputans si quid superesset agendum*—half measures are at no time good; they would now be ruinous.—No, Sir, we must meet the Catholic with that generous and unreserved confidence which confers a favour, in doing a mere act of justice: this will give you the strong government the honourable gentleman wishes for; with this aid you may defy Paine and all his works, the French mania and all their Jacobine emissaries; you will have a united people to oppose to all enemies foreign or domestic.—Sir, I confess I love a strong government, because I know that liberty cannot exist without it; I will tell you how to have one; "make your people happy, and your government will be strong—adopt the motto taken up by your Chancellor, I mean your late Chancellor, "be just and fear not" and I am convinced that his Majesty, by his gracious interposition in behalf of his oppressed subjects, has given the best refutation to the anti-monarchical libels of Paine.—With respect to the war, I shall only say, that however I may lament

the impending prospect of war, yet there is one point relative to it on which I am confident we shall all agree! The moment our sister country shall be involved in it, this nation must exert her utmost energy for the common honour and interest of the empire; never shall it be said that the support of Ireland was relied upon by Great Britain, and on the issue found to be a fallacious dependance.

Mr. CURRAN called the attention of the House to our public situation abroad and at home.—On the eve of a war with France, and the part of the empire most likely to be the scene of it, and to feel its dreadful effects. He said it was a war of that kind which resembled nothing in the memory of man.—Not a war of any definite object, nor that looked to peace on any definite terms. The mode of carrying it on as nouvelle as its object; a war in which a strange political fanaticism was the precursor of arms; a war to be resisted only by the union of the British empires, and probably encouraged on the part of France by a sense of its disunion.—For at the moment when the British minister should have held out to French ambition the united resistance of the British empire, at that moment the voice of three millions of the Irish nation was heard declaring to the throne, that they laboured under a slavery which was too terrible to be longer endured, and that of course our enemies had not any such united resistance to apprehend. Our object then, he said, was, in the first instance, to take away such a hope from our enemies, and such a danger from ourselves, by making that union complete.—By no other means could the empire act with the necessary energy; by no other means could the executive power of the empire provide for its preservation. To this great end every jealousy should be laid aside. The smallest attack from without must bring you to the earth, if you are already unpoised and reeling with intestine discord. You must make your government strong, and to do that, he said, you must unite your people, and to do that you must destroy those foolish distinctions that have separated them from each other, and you must change that conduct that has destroyed their confidence in this House and in this Administration.

An honourable baronet, [Sir J. Parnell] he said, had very fairly admitted that even the parliament had become unpopular in the country. Mr. Curran declared a very high opinion of that gentleman's talents and integrity, but differed with him in thinking that the speeches of opposition had occasioned that unpopularity; on the contrary, he said, the Government had become unpopular and odious by its corruption and weakness, and that the credit of parliament had become a victim to the same cause. How could the credit of parliament survive its independency?

And where, he asked, was the latter to be found? What portion of the property or sense of the people could be found in the present deplorable state of this House? Deplorable he would call it; for he differed much from those who reproached gentlemen for not acting with more principle than they shewed. A great number, much more than half of us, have no manner of connexion with the people.—They represent their money. But what money? that of which the possession makes them rich and independent? No; but that which they have parted with, and thereby become poor and dependent. What then, said he, can they represent but that poverty, and the cries of those wants which they have lost the honest means of relieving, the cries of nature for that bread which they have sold in order to become senators? Let no man blame them for acting as they do. As little let any other trader think this political traffic more beneficial than his own.—If he should, let him observe the progress and the profit of this traffic:—Sir Francis sells his estate and buys a seat; brings Madam and Miss to town, where, I dare say, they are likely to make many edifying discoveries; is introduced to a minister, who, as the right honourable secretary says of himself, and I am sure justly, knows not how to be uncivil to any man.——Well, Sir, Sir Francis takes a squeeze for a promise, and full of future place, comes down and speaks for the good of the nation. He soon finds he has unluckily neglected one necessary preparation—the learning to read:—his eloquence cannot live long upon “hear him.”—He finds he is better any where than on his legs. He therefore betakes himself to his seat, pops his chin upon his stick, listens and nods with much sapience, repays his “hear him,” and walks forth among the ayes with good emphasis and sound discretion; thus he works on for seven sessions, and, at last, gets not one place, but three places—in the stage coach—for himself, and Madam, and Miss, to go back to a ruined farm, with ruined healths, and ruined morals; unworthy and unfit for the only society they can have; a prey to famished wants, and mortified pretensions; with minds exactly like their faded castle silks—the minds too feeble to be reformed, and the gowns too rotten to be scoured. Sir, said he, I join in the laugh that, I find, I have unintendingly drawn upon this melancholy picture. I intended it as an appeal to compassion and forgiveness. I intended it as an answer to the obloquy which has been, unthinkingly, cast upon us. How can the people, Sir, blame a man for acting unwisely or unworthily for the nation, who does not act wisely or worthily for himself?—Or what right have the people to question the conduct of any man who does not represent them? Sir, said he, it comes shortly to this:—the disunion of the people from this House arises from this; the people are not represented.—And to restore the union you

must have the people restored to a fair representation; in other words, by a radical reform of the Commons.

Sir, continued he, a most important question next arises; namely, what is the people? Is it the soil of Ireland, or the men who live upon it? I do not, said he, know of any moral or political quality that an acre of land can possess. And therefore, for my part, I have no other idea of any country, with respect to its rights, than the aggregate of its inhabitants. In Ireland we have tried an experiment on another principle, namely, whether she could be free upon the exclusion of three-fourths of her population—and we have found that she is not free; and that, therefore, she is disunited and infirm. Sir, upon this question, respecting our Catholic brethren, my opinion is most materially changed since the last session. I was then actuated by a compassion for their depressed and unhappy state. I knew and loved their virtues, their order, and their loyalty; and I was among the very small number who endeavoured to open the gates of the constitution, and receive them as my fellow-subjects and fellow-Christians. But I thought I was acting merely from regard to them;—I now think that without them the country cannot be saved. The nation has felt this necessity, and I am a convert to it now.—Bind them to equal exertion in the public cause, by giving them equal interest in it.—Give them no qualified emancipation.—I would not *rely* upon that man's defence of liberty, who can himself be content with equivocal freedom.—Do this, emancipate your fellow-subjects, and reform their representation, and you unite Ireland with herself and with Great Britain, and you restore the energy of the empire when it needs it most. Nor is this the first time, said he, that we have laboured in this House for this necessary reform. This reform consists of two parts; the one external, by restoring the franchise of the elected; the other, as essential by securing the independency of the representative; this we have laboured for years past, but in vain; for this have we in vain pressed a place, a pension, a responsibility bill. In vain shall the people vote without for a member, if there is no law to guard his independency within. No, Sir, the vital principle of parliamentary reform was contained in those measures which we have pressed, and therefore has the whole force of Administration been exerted to defeat them. He then adverted to what had been said respecting the strength of Administration. He agreed perfectly. It was the crisis of internal and external danger. An hated government, an unpopular parliament, a discontented people. He did not believe Great Britain was fairly apprised of our state. If she was, he was confident she could not be so infatuated as to suffer these abuses, which had kindled the present flame in Ireland, and endangered the union between the two countries. He then took a view of the persons

and measures of the present administration; which, he said, was a system of incapacity and profligacy. He inveighed against the sale of the peerage, the attack on the charter of Dublin, and the corruption which, he said, was openly avowed in that House. What avails, said he, your strengthening the people by restoring their rights and their union, if you strengthen not the executive hand at this moment of danger, by restoring its confidence in the administration? And how can you give them confidence in a set of simpletons, or clerks, or avowed enemies of the people, who are at once hated and despised? Talk not of union with England, said he, while such obstacles remain; think not of joining two nations with less skill than a carpenter must have in joining two boards together. He cannot glue them till he has cleaned the joint; nor can we unite two nations without removing the depravity that must eternally prevent their cohesion. Let us therefore have a government that can be honest and respected, and a senate that represents the people, and our union with England will be saved, in spite of all the efforts of fanaticism and sedition. Those who abuse their trust are they who render government odious, and give too specious a pretence to those incendiaries who wish to subvert all order and introduce the despotism of anarchy and robbery under the name of reformation. Without such preachers, as the clerks who form this government, become by their practices, the true principles of British constitution could never be defamed with effect; without the flagrant abuses that we see, sedition could have no pretext.

He then adverted to the rejection of the Catholic petition by the influence of the Irish administration. The principle of that rejection has been disavowed by the throne. Administration, he said, had now an interest distinct from the united wishes of the people and their sovereign. The present question, said he, I feel is between a sovereign who has saved the people, and an administration who would have destroyed it. I will vote for that sovereign and that people. Their petition was rejected by those who called themselves their representatives; the next year that same petition passed over that parliament, and approached the throne. Had it been rejected there, there remained only one other throne for misery to invoke, and from that last and dreadful appeal, let it never be forgotten by Irish gratitude, that we have been saved by the piety and compassion of the father of his people. The opposition to the amendment he therefore considered as conveying the sentiment which we felt of the profligacy which exposed us, and of the gracious interposition by which we have so providentially been preserved.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL spoke at large on the subject; in the course of which he took occasion to remark on what fell from an honourable member [Mr. Duquerry] on Thursday night.

Mr. DUQUERY. The various lights in which the honourable gentleman on the floor has been pleased to exhibit me, call for some little acknowledgment, and will excuse a momentary intrusion on the attention of the House.—He has described me as a man dejected in spirits; he has held me forth as a trumpeter; and, last of all, he has placed me behind the counter, opening a shop of grievances. With regard to the first charge, of being low in spirits, I can assure the honourable gentleman that he is totally mistaken; I do not think that I ever found myself in better spirits in my life, and possibly the cheerfulness of my mind may result from a consciousness of discharging my duty as I ought; however, I by no means pretend to be possessed of that happy vivacity with which that honourable gentleman so peculiarly abounds.—He is blessed with spirits that can scarcely be depressed by any event.—On one occasion, however, I recollect the natural cheerfulness of his mind had almost forsaken him: When he beheld the royal sun, whose cheering beam had shone upon him for many years, verging, as he conceived, towards its final setting, and a new luminary rising in the political hemisphere, to which he had not yet paid his adoration;—then, indeed, for the first time, his lively spirits left him, and they sunk in proportion to his much dreaded loss of emolument; for with some men the true barometer of their spirits is the security of their office; fortunately, however, our gracious sovereign was restored to his health, and the honourable gentleman recovered his spirits. The station of a trumpeter, which the honourable gentleman has with so much kindness conferred upon me, I should accept of with pleasure, if like him I could blow forth the virtues of viceroys and their ministers; yet ever unpractised as I am in flattery, I shall be happy to become his trumpeter, if he be so good to permit what notes I can sound in his praise, which will be grateful to the ears of the people. The last respectable station which he has been pleased to allot me, is that of opening a shop of grievances; if by that elegant expression he means, that I have stated to this House with deep concern the sufferings of the people, I shall admit the charge he has so handsomely made upon me; but whoever may open a shop of grievances, that honourable gentleman can best inform the House who has furnished that shop with all its materials. There are men indeed who traffic on the wrongs and sufferings of the nation, who turn the grievances of the people to their own immediate profit, and in that point of view are not barely retailers but wholesale merchants in grievances. I am happy however to perceive, that one of those sources of public disquietude, which may well be denominated a public grievance, is likely soon to be removed, and so far my stock in trade to be happily diminished; I mean the sufferings and oppressions of our Roman Catholic brethren, that worthy body of men, whose

humble petition that honourable gentleman concurred in rejecting; and resisted with premature humour and unnecessary jocularity, but he has now been pleased to inform us that he is for concurring in giving them a share in the elective franchise, and when he declares so, we can easily divine that the sentiments of administration are not unfriendly to the Catholics.

The honourable gentleman seems to conceive that it is impossible that any man in this House can be governed in the line of his public conduct by any thing but the possession or the acceptance of office; I do assure you, Sir, as I value the esteem of this august assembly, or your good opinion of me as a gentleman, I was not prompted in the part I took last night, by any one selfish motive whatsoever; when I declared my sentiments on the situation of public affairs, and the intended line of my future conduct, I did conceive myself as taking a step decidedly against my own private interest; hitherto perhaps I have not been sufficiently awake to the cause of the people. I have yet time enough, I trust, to atone for my past deficiencies; there are other men in this House of bolder minds and more extensive knowledge; enlightened by their wisdom and animated with their zeal, I shall endeavour, by my future efforts, to prove that I am not insensible to the welfare of my country; for although I may be one of those who are very liable to error, yet I am not one of that number whom it is easy to confound, and impossible to correct.

Mr. HARDY arose, and in the warmest manner approved of every thing that had fallen from Mr. Dnquery, whom, he said, he always loved and admired, and was certain he ever should. He paid him the highest compliment for the speech which he had just made, and that of the night before; and observed, that excellent as his honourable friend's talents were, he should not pay him so poor a compliment as to say that it was to their exertion alone he owed that applause which he had so justly received. No, it was derived from that unbought and involuntary respect which assemblies as well as individuals pay to the effusions of an honourable and disinterested mind. He made no doubt, from what he saw then going forward, that his honourable friend's example would every day become more prevalent, and that gentlemen, when they entered the House of Commons, would think of their country as well as of themselves.

An honourable and learned gentleman, continued Mr. Hardy, has thought proper, among other things which he was pleased to mention of my honourable friend, to say that last night he was in low spirits, and "most musical most melancholy." It is the first time I ever heard that he was either the one or the other. But since my honourable friend has this night retired from the

ministerial side of the House, will the learned gentleman allow me to do that which he did not do himself, that is to quote the whole couplet alluded to by him, and then my honourable friend may be addressed thus:

“ Sweet bird, that shun’st the noise of folly,
“ Most musical, most melancholy.”

Mr. Grattan’s amendment at length passed nem. con.

Mr. PERY brought up the address to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant from the committee; which was agreed to without a division, though there were many dissenting voices.

The address was as follows:

To his Excellency JOHN, EARL OF WESTMORELAND, Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland.

The humble ADDRESS of the KNIGHTS, CITIZENS and BURGESSES, in Parliament assembled.

“ *May it please your Excellency,*

“ We his Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Ireland, in Parliament assembled, return your Excellency our cordial thanks for your excellent speech this day from the throne to both Houses of Parliament.

“ We have seen with real concern the attempts which have been made to excite a spirit of discontent and disturbance among his Majesty’s subjects in a part of the kingdom, and which has manifested a tendency to effect by violence an alteration in the constitution.

“ We also sincerely lament that a desire of conquest and dominion should have induced France to interfere in the government of other countries, and to adopt measures with regard to his Majesty’s allies, the States General, which are neither conformable to the law of nations nor the positive stipulations of existing treaties, especially when the conduct of his Majesty and the States General had been guided by the strictest neutrality.

“ Under these circumstances we fully concur in the expediency of augmenting the forces upon this establishment.

“ The measures also which have been taken by your Excellency with the advice of the Privy Council to prevent the exportation of corn, provisions and naval stores, arms and ammunition, will receive our support, and we shall readily sanction any temporary infringement of the laws, which was rendered necessary by the urgency of the times.

“ We shall truly participate in those feelings of satisfaction which must fill the royal mind, if the blessings of peace may be

preserved by that firm and temperate conduct which his Majesty has determined to pursue, and as we are jealous of the honour of his crown, and sensible of the general interests of the empire, his Majesty may be assured of our zeal in supporting his determination to fulfil those positive engagements by which he is bound to his allies, and to maintain the security and interests of his dominions.

" We thank your Excellency for ordering the national accounts to be laid before us, and we shall cheerfully make such provisions for the public service and the honour and security of his Majesty's crown and government, as the exigencies of the times may require.

" We return our acknowledgments to your Excellency for directing our attention to the agriculture, the manufactures, and particularly the linen manufacture of this kingdom, as well as to the Protestant charter schools and other public institutions which have usually received the bounty of Parliament. These objects of national utility will not fail to engage our accustomed regard and liberality.

" We shall immediately point our endeavours to devise such measures as shall appear most conducive to the preservation of internal tranquillity; and with this view we shall particularly apply ourselves to revise the provision of the act for establishing a militia.

" We cannot too gratefully express our acknowledgments to his Majesty for his confidence in our determination to uphold the authority of government and enforce a due submission to the laws, but particularly for his gracious declaration to co-operate with our exertions and cordially to support them, and we shall readily consider of such measures as may be most likely to strengthen and cement a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his Majesty's subjects in support of the established constitution.

" We are sensible of his Majesty's goodness in relying upon our wisdom and liberality, and we shall obey his Majesty's commands in giving a full consideration to the situation of our Roman Catholic brethren.

" We are happy in this opportunity of repeating our satisfaction that his Majesty has continued your Excellency in the government of Ireland; and persuaded that your Excellency will exert yourself to maintain our excellent constitution in church and state, which we feel to be the best security for civil liberty and general prosperity, we shall be ever zealous to promote the ease and happiness of your administration."

Lord TYRONE gave notice that he did not hold himself pledged in the Catholic business further than discussion.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1793.

No other business was transacted this day, but official routine.

MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 1793.

The bill for indemnifying such persons as have acted for the service of the public, in advising or carrying into execution two proclamations of the Lord Lieutenant and Council of this kingdom, bearing date the 26th day of December, 1792, and for establishing certain bonds therein mentioned, was read a third time and passed.

MR. WILLIAM BRABAZON BONSENBY said, I rise to solicit the attention of the House. I believe that every gentleman will agree with me, that this country now stands in a situation in which it never stood before; a situation certainly of much difficulty, and consequently of some danger. I am sure that no man can be more desirous than I am, to give every constitutional support to the crown for the benefit and defence of the country. I totally disapprove of the wild and mischievous doctrines which have of late found their way into this country; I dislike republican principles, I detest republics, because, from all the knowledge I have been able to acquire of the ancient republics, and that which I have of the existing republics of Europe, I am satisfied they are governments unfavourable to national liberty.

I hope to see a limited monarchy perpetuated in this country, as the best and wisest government possible. I reflect with great concern on the abuses of the constitution, and that every argument which has hitherto been used, and every effort which has been made to remedy them has been treated with contempt by the ministers of the crown. I cannot help observing that the administration of this country and that of England, (on which it depends,) has been so blind to its own interest, as to shew a total disregard to the murmurs and complaints of an injured nation; their obstinate perseverance to this system, will, in the end, induce measures in which they will be forced to acquiesce.

Every effort having hitherto proved ineffectual for the correction of these abuses, we must now have recourse to something more radical and effectual. I should be exceedingly sorry indeed that any person should conceive that I could, for a moment, harbour the idea of altering the constitution of this country; but in endeavouring to correct the abuses, I am certain, I do not interfere with the principles of it, and under that conviction, I

shall take an early opportunity of submitting a proposal to the House, for a more equal representation of the people in parliament.

Mr. CONOLLY rose, to declare his resolution to support the measure proposed by his right honourable friend. In 1782, he observed, a proposition of this kind came before the House, but it came from a body of armed men sitting in the metropolis.—Such a proposition from such a body he would always think it right to resist—because the power of reforming the parliament resided in the parliament itself: it was on that account he rejected the proposal then. Since that period the public grievances had increased very considerably—other remedies to heal them had been in vain attempted;—he would therefore recommend it to Government to turn their thoughts to that grand one—reform. When the House should achieve that, as he had no doubt but they would do, they would have attained the salvation of their country. The Catholics, he observed, require to be admitted into the constitution; if a reform were effected, it would be for the public good they should be admitted; but while things continued in their present state, it would be ohly making bad worse.

Mr. GRATTAN. Never, never since I have sat in parliament, did I hear words that gave me more satisfaction. I have been near seventeen years a member of parliament, and never did I hear in this House oratory more convincing or transporting. I feel myself young, and my mind possessed with rapture little known to men of my time of life, except on such an occasion as this. I had myself intended to have brought forth the question of the reform of parliament, but I did not wish to pre-occupy such a question; for what right had I to earn popularity at the expence of other men? Those are the gentlemen who ought to lead in this great question;—the men who make the sacrifices, to them belongs the laurel;—be it my humble office to follow on this subject, and to applaud,

“ And while along the stream of time their name

“ Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,

“ Say, shall this little bark——.”

This is not the first time in which the right honourable gentleman has made sacrifices to the country; in 1769 that gentleman, and all his connexions, were deprived of all their emoluments for supporting the privileges of this House against an altered money bill. In 1789 they were also dismissed for defending the privileges of the two Houses of Parliament against an unconstitutional and condemned viceroy; and now they advance a third time to surrender great power, all their monopolies, and to embark in the vessel of commonwealth, and fairly and proudly to rise or fall

with the fortunes of their country.—They pledge it right; their natural situation in this country is so considerable that whatever family sacrifices they make to the public weal, they must always occupy a prime condition, from their property, character, integrity, and talents.

The question of parliamentary reform is now fairly brought forth; it consists, I think, of two parts, external and internal. The external relates to the creation of the House of Commons; the internal to its corruption. A radical reformation in both is indispensable; first, it is indispensable that the House of Commons should be chosen by the people; second, that after it is chosen by the people, it should not be bought by the minister. In either of these cases, and still more in both, the people are not represented. The House of Commons is not chosen by them; the house is governed by the minister. The people have not the blessings of the constitution;—they are not represented;—they are deprived of that great and invaluable blessing, supposed to be possessed by the electors of this kingdom, the blessing of being represented; and accordingly we find the House of Commons the organ of a will other than that of the people—the will of the minister, the will of the viceroy, the will of the secretary, but not the will of the people. This is an abuse so evident, and so fatal, that I need not impress it more deeply upon you; indeed you seem fully sensible of it; and now, when the persons interested in the above come forth to you to surrender that interest, who can defend such a mischief, or refuse such a sacrifice?—I mean, therefore, to move for a committee to inquire into the abuses that obtain in the formation of the representation; but as those abuses are not all I mean to extend the inquiry to, the abuses that obtain in the corruption of that representation, which are both contained in the words abuses of the constitution; it will not be sufficient, depend upon it, that the House of Commons should be chosen by the people, it is absolutely necessary that the House, after it is so chosen by the people, should not be bought by the minister, otherwise the people would have only the trouble to elect men for the minister afterwards to purchase; and therefore it is, I wish to impress on gentlemen the necessity of attending to this part of the reform of parliament, its internal reform, on which the purity of its conduct depends. In vain may the people send men to parliament, fairly and popularly elected, if the minister has a power of giving those men places and pensions without number, and without responsibility; or, as has been disclosed by one of our ministers, a power of charging the nation with half a million, or any other sum, however great, to purchase a majority in parliament; therefore do not imagine you have secured to the people an adequate, or any representation, by giving them a fair and adequate right

of choice, if you leave to the minister the uncontrolled and indefinite right of bribery : a place bill, pension bill, responsibility bill, are therefore a necessary part of the great system which you are proceeding to form for your country. The whole must be reformed by a radical measure. The nation expects it, and you have taught the nation to expect it. The measure must secure to the people of this country a representation elected by the people, and independent of the minister ; nothing less than that is worthy of the occasion, nor adequate to the exigency or the expectation we must have in these walls, the real genuine choice of the people, unbought, unstipulated. The motion, therefore, which I mean to submit, goes to this part of the subject, viz. to inquire into the abuses which have taken place in the regulation of the House of Commons, as well as its formation ; it goes to the whole of the House of Commons ; excess of influence and defects of representation. Gentlemen say, this is no time for such a measure ; I answer the argument of those gentlemen who say not now, at least some of them, have at all times opposed parliamentary reform, and opposed it not on the time, but the principle ; opposed it, because they had an interest in preferring a representation by borough, to a representation by the people. But, Sir, if the question wanted the aid of any argument arising from the time, I say, the question has that argument in the present moment. Is not a French republic set by convention abroad, and alleged to be set up by a few at home, in rivalry to the British constitution ; and is not this the moment to give that constitution all its natural advantages, by purging it of all its unnatural deformities ? How can you combat the French doctrine so well, or effectually, as by the reform of parliament ? That is, by the constitution of England, its substance and not its shadow. Another argument the time suggests is, the agitation of this question at present with the people : it is now abroad. At a period less anxious, the moving the question had been to agitate the people, but the people being now agitated, the moving the question is the only way to compose them. From the best information I can collect, nothing will satisfy the North but a reform of parliament, nothing will satisfy the people but a reform of parliament. There is another argument in favour of agitating the question now, which existed at no other time but the present, and that is, that there was no other time in which you had a chance of succeeding. It is in my mind always an argument for bringing forward a question, that you have it in your power to succeed. This is the time ; arm the question now and you prevail, and in that success you secure to the country those blessings of liberty and constitution, of which she has heard so much, and naturally longs to taste.

I move you, that a committee be appointed to inquire whether any, and what abuses, have taken place in the constitution

of this country, or the administration of its government, and to report such temperate remedies, as may appear most likely to redress the same.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY seconded the motion.

Sir JOHN PARNEL said, the motion was very wisely and temperately introduced, by denying that force should be used to extort any measure of this kind, and by asserting the exclusive right of the House to reform itself. He said the assertions so often made, that the remonstrances of the people were unattended to, came with peculiar ill grace at this period, when the crown had recently called on parliament to attend to the complaints of a certain description of men, and all the grievances they complained of, were immediately redressed. He observed, that though all the grievances were thus immediately redressed, the same body at the moment came forward with new complaints, though during several years that they had been talking over their grievances, these which they now say are the most distressing of all, had never once occurred to them. This, he said, must teach the House a lesson, that the more was granted, the more would always be asked. He wished to know precisely what the object of the motion was; it might mean much or little; it was necessary, he thought, to state what was meant to be done. It was necessary for the public peace, for if the public were to be acted on by general words, it might easily be agitated; but, perhaps, never could be calmed. He hoped the House would not now do what they never had done, come to a general resolution implying abuses, without any proof they existed. The specific bills that had been mentioned as having been rejected by the House, he said, it was obvious, ought not to have passed, as they came forward, continually, each successive session in a different form. If the gentlemen that proposed them were thus indeterminate in their ideas, he thought it was not strange that the House did not adopt measures, with respect to which, the opinions of even the gentlemen who proposed them were continually changing.

Colonel CONYNGHAM thought that when a measure of this kind was temperately introduced, there could be no danger in the discussion of it. He had entertained a design of saying something on this subject himself, when the Catholic question should come before the House; and if the gentlemen who now introduced it, would continue to deafen clamour as they did that night, he would pledge himself to support them. He did not think the present time was a time for bringing forward against the Government, every charge that could be made

against them. The people, he was certain, did not feel the grievances that had been mentioned in several instances, but on this subject he allowed that public expectation was very high.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD opposed the motion for a committee.

Mr. STUART (of Killimoon.) The motion made by my right honourable friend for a committee, has my hearty concurrence. I do not know whether to admire most, the wisdom or the moderation of the measure, and it is with much surprise and concern, that I observe gentlemen, on the other side of the House, inclined to resist it. My chief reason for rising at present, is to express the pleasure and satisfaction which I feel on hearing two right honourable friends of mine, give notice of their intention speedily to bring forward a motion for a reform in the representation of the people in parliament. It is a measure long and loudly called for by the people, but their calls have ever been temperate and respectful, and kept within the bounds of law and constitution. I had the honour, some years ago, to present a petition from the county I represent on this subject. I was then, and have continued, a warm friend to reform. If I had addressed myself to you earlier in this session, I should have thought it my duty to dwell upon abuses, which have crept into the administration of our Government, but considering, as I do, that an effectual reform, in the representation of the people, will afford a certain remedy for all our grievances, and having well-founded hopes of the success of the measure, when I see it undertaken by such able and respectable men, I shall decline that subject at present, and only declare to my two right honourable friends, that they may depend upon my sincere and zealous exertions in support of reform in parliament.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE was against the motion.

Mr. DENIS BROWNE agreed with the honourable baronet who had spoken last, that there never was a time that required more the honest exertion of every man than the present; nothing that a government could give to him, would be a compensation for giving there a vote that might lead to an improper proceeding of parliament; still less would he be influenced by popularity; that was a feather that was often undeservedly got, and easily lost. The first reformer of France sunk before the republican; the republican before those who introduced into that country anarchy and murder.

The right honourable gentleman on the floor, after having rescued the trade and constitution of this country from the dominion of Great Britain, was himself unpopular. The man of the people must have no arresting principle; he must follow where their violence or caprice leads, or he is lost. It should be his part to do his duty; it was the business of the people to be pleased with his manner of doing it. The momentous question before the House had come forward very unexpectedly; he had never heard of it till the moment it was moved by the right honourable gentleman; he had not therefore sufficiently considered it, to give that considerate opinion it demanded. He had not a doubt that the people of Ireland were not fully represented in parliament, but he had great doubts of the expediency of bringing forward the measure of parliamentary reform at this time; there was a fever in the world, that made agitations of the public mind highly dangerous, that risked the certain advantages that result from peace. He thought there were times, when measures that might be probably good in themselves, were dangerous and inexpedient, and that this was a time of that description. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that there was an abominable, sanguine principle in this country, that led its parliament sometimes to pride, to humility, and to timidity, in times of danger. That such a principle, which he acknowledged, might make it expedient to use the moment of their timidity to press a measure, that in their pride they might scoff at. But he had another objection, and a strong one, to bring forward, reform of parliament at present: he had heard in Connaught, in Munster and Leinster, the situation of the Roman Catholics complained of as a grievance. This great body of the people had, however, confined themselves to complaints of their own particular situation; they had neither complaints to make of, nor encomiums to lavish on a constitution, of which they had no part: where then does this complaint come from, that steps between parliament and the redress of their Catholic grievances? From the town of Belfast; and he would call on those gentlemen, who said they had opposed a parliamentary reform, when coming from an armed convention in 1782, to compare those times and those proceedings with the present. The armed convention in 1783, consisted of the leaders of a popular army, flushed with the praise of the people and the parliament. From the county he then represented, two gentlemen appeared as delegates, that had as good fortunes, and were every way as highly circumstanced as either his colleague or himself. What is the proceeding, and who are the people of that town that now send us in this measure? Military associations, that join with their schemes of reforming the constitution of Ireland, an approbation of the proceedings of France; that declare they will

keep the constitution of King, Lords and Commons, provided they are not put to any trouble in settling those bodies, in the manner most pleasing to themselves; if they are, they will dismiss them all; that call on every man who cannot serve their cause, which they call the cause of this country, with his person, to forward it with his money. For this purpose, a military chest, as it is called, is established, for the declared purpose of buying arms, armour, and ammunition. The Rev. Mr. Kilburn, in a very animated debate of that town, informs us that lords are a grievance, and ought to be dismissed, because wisdom is not hereditary; that king and lords ought to be dismissed, because they were two to one against the people, which proceedings were most violent, and ought to be most reprobated by parliament. Did the proceedings of France begin with declarations of such principles? It is not praise of the constitution, it is exertion alone can save this country. There was no family in Ireland would lose less by reform of parliament than his; they had no borough; none would gain more. They had great property, but a superior interest; that of public quiet made him wish for a postponement of that measure at present.

Mr. BUSHE opposed the idea of postponing the Catholic question, until after the reform should be decided upon. It stood much better upon its own ground: we had taken twelve months to consider it; we were ripe for decision. The question of reform would require deliberation, and its fate was yet uncertain. He hoped the House would not agree to suffer the relief of the Catholics to hang on any uncertain event. Besides, the mover of the question of reform had declared, that he intended to make the new representation a representation of property. Why then delay the other, if we were convinced, as he was, that Catholic property ought to be represented? For whether we reform or do not reform, in either event the Catholics ought to be admitted. The way to give them fair play, was to bring on this question directly.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH desired to know what a parliamentary reform was? He had read many books upon the subject, and had conversed with many persons, yet none of them could give him a satisfactory answer to the question. All his friends to the measure, thought this not a time to bring the measure forward, as the nation was disturbed, and he agreed with them.

Mr. SHERIDAN hoped it was almost unnecessary for him to say, he was a zealous friend to parliamentary reform; his political connection was a powerful motive with him to be its

strenuous advocate. It had been said, that a reform in the representation of the people would tranquillize the kingdom; he begged leave to say, that nothing less than such a reform could restore peace to the country: a right honourable baronet, [Sir Henry Cavendish] apparently with a view to reduce the importance of the subject, had told the House he had met reform in the shops and in the streets, that the citizen sold his poplin to reform; and Paddy every where scratched his head to reform; the right honourable baronet might go farther, and he would find reform at the loom, at the plough; the language of every tongue, the object of every rank: but what did the attempt at ridicule prove? When Shakespeare, who wrote from nature, makes Hubert relate to King John, "I saw a smith devouring a taylor's news," it is to affect the monarch more than the power of France could. The right honourable baronet had called upon the right honourable gentleman, who had so nobly and so generously introduced the subject, to state his plan of reform. The right honourable gentleman, with all his talents, and all the talents that surround him, would be rash indeed, were he on this night to offer any plan; a rational, a consistent, and temperate reform must be a work of mature consideration and rather slow deliberation; to be perfect it must be progressive. But do you wish to know at once what ought to be reformed? Do we not all know in what manner many are brought into this House? If one great man uses his borough influence to the best of his judgment, as his country would use it? If that influence was done away, in point of constitution, there is no distinction between him and the poor creature, who, looking for dignity or office, brings his poorer creature into parliament, politely inviting them to that situation, and asking in return nothing more than the use of their conscience. Are there not many among us who could not find the way to the place they represent; who never saw a constituent; who were never in a borough; who at times cannot recollect the name of it. He said, he did not much relish or deal in anecdotes on serious subjects, but there was one which was true and very apposite. By a courtesy of the House of Commons in England, members of the Irish parliament are admitted to hear the debates; a friend of his, then a member, wishing to avail himself of the privilege, desired admittance; the door-keeper desired to know what place he represented; what place, why I am an Irish member! Oh, dear Sir, we are obliged to be extremely cautious, for a few days ago Barrington, the pick-pocket passed as an Irish member. Why then, upon my soul, I forget the borough I represent, but if you get me Watson's Almanack I will shew you.

SIR LAURENCE PARSONS thought the question of reform, and the Catholic question, were connected, and should go together, and that from them united should be formed the great charter of Irish liberty. The Catholic claims, he thought, could not now be resisted, but he wished they should be admitted into the constitution, with as much caution as possible. He wished that their admission should be gradual, but certain; he threw out an idea of first admitting men possessed of a certain quantum of property, making the admission of men of an inferior degree of property certain also, after a certain period; and finally after a period still longer, he thought the whole of the body might be admitted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL was decidedly adverse to the motion, because going as it did to enquire as well into the conduct of Administration, as into the abuses of the constitution, It would tend to produce animosity rather than union in the House, which was so essentially necessary at this period. In the course of his speech he avowed his determination to oppose, with his latest breath, every attempt to introduce under the pretext of reform, the principle that every man should have a vote, because he is a man, without any regard to property. No reform could he at any time agree to, where property was not the essential qualification of the elector. The idea seemed to meet the unanimous sense of the House.

MR. CARRY proposed an amendment, viz. that instead of a committee to enquire into the abuses of the constitution and of the administration: a committee should be appointed to enquire into the state of the representation.

MR. GEORGE PONSONBY rose to say, that if he comprehended the amendment proposed by the honourable gentleman, [Mr. Corry] its object was to separate the parts of the resolution, as moved by his right honourable friend, [Mr. Grattan] in order to keep back from inquiry the abuses, which have been introduced into the practice of the constitution, by the administration of this country. This object, if attained, might be useful to Government, but was totally incompatible with the object of the original motion, and therefore could not receive his assent.

The propriety or necessity of making any alteration in the representation of the people in parliament, could never be fairly ascertained, without a previous inquiry into the desire and portion of influence, which the crown was enabled to exert over the members of that House, in the present state of representation, and therefore it was essential to examine how far the misconduct of administration, in inducing the House to refuse

all measures, that had been offered by the gentlemen on this side of the House, which would operate to secure the independence of parliament, as at present constituted, had itself proved and produced the necessity of resorting to so hazardous an experiment as an alteration in the state of representation. A celebrated author had said, that the government which was best administered, was best. He could not, himself, agree with that opinion, in its utmost latitude, but he was sure that a constitution which possessed so much of good, and so little of evil as ours, would never have been thought a fit subject for alteration by the people, if they had not been roused and goaded to it by the evil practices, of so corrupt an administration. An honourable and learned member, on the other side of the House, had said, that his friends had flattered themselves very much, when they had thought that the refusal of those measures, which they had proposed in parliament, or their speeches, or their efforts, had all contributed to exasperate the minds of the people. That the people were much discontented, he admitted; but, he said, that the pen of Mr. Paine, and the sword of General Dumourier, had been the real instigators of those discontents. He was sure the learned member did not mean to insinuate, that the gentlemen on his side of the House approved of the writings of Mr. Paine, or the politics of the French; and for his own part, he considered Mr. Paine then, what he had always considered him to be, the hired emissary of France, employed for the purpose of endeavouring to make confusion in these countries; and as to the French themselves, he considered them as the most unhappy, and infatuated nation that had ever escaped from despotism; and he was confident that if it was found necessary, for the advantage of those countries, to go to war with France, that the gentlemen, on his side of the House, would be found, at least, as cordial and constant, in their support of the crown, in the prosecution of the war, as the gentlemen on the other side. But he entirely differed with the learned member, as to the causes of the discontents. What had happened in the last parliament, during the agitation of the regency, had made the influence of the executive power over the members of the House of Commons plain and evident to the dullest peasants. At last they had seen the members of the House of Commons of that day running from one side of the House to the other, just as they conceived the executive government likely to be placed, and running, finally, to the support of that very administration which they had not only deserted, but actually censured by their votes. Those gentlemen who had abided by their principles, and who had observed and lamented the scandalous and injurious effects of the influence of the crown, at that period, had been ever since employed in endeavouring to e-

duce it by constitutional means within constitutional bounds; the laws which they had proposed were all sanctioned by the example of Great Britain, whose legislature had at different periods adopted them, in order to learn the independence of the House of Commons, these bills, the place, pension, responsibility, &c. &c. have been uniformly rejected by the prevalence of the same shameful influence, and all hopes cut off of reducing the amount and quantum of that influence of the crown over the members of this House. It did not, and it could not fail to strike them, that the mere object of supporting and augmenting this vast patronage, was to enable the British minister to exert the same powers in this country by the means of this influence which he had possessed in it. Before the revolution of 1782, some recent events which have taken place, have also contributed to the same purpose; the people have seen an English administration hallooing, if I may use that vulgar expression, the Roman Catholics of this country against the Protestants, and the Irish administration hallooing the Protestants against the Catholics, all for the purpose of deriding, weakening, and trampling upon both; the English minister did not encourage the Catholics, from any love to them, but merely to deter, if possible, the Protestant Irishmen in this House from their opposition to his measures; this circumstance should make the people of Ireland reflect deeply upon their situation, and see clearly how impossible it is for the country to do itself justice, whilst its inhabitants are divided amongst themselves. Some Irishmen, perhaps, might think there was danger in gratifying the Catholics in their present demands. He thought there was none, and that it should be done frankly and cordially. They are Irish, he said, and I am Irish; and with the prosperity or adversity of this, our common country will I rise or fall. I am sincerely attached to the connexion of the two countries, and I love the people of England as much as any man, but I will never agree to sacrifice the rights or the interests of this my native country to the schemes of any English minister. The honourable member who moved the amendment, naturally wishes to withdraw the attention of the people from the conduct of his own friends; but for my part, I freely confess, that although I have not any personal objection to any of the gentlemen on the other side the House, yet I wish to rivet the eyes of the people upon those Irishmen who have enabled an Englishman to commit those abuses which drive us to so awful a measure as an alteration in the representation of the people.

Mr. GRATTAN. Sir, any member has a right to separate the questions, I agree to separate them; my motion was to the abuses in the representation of the people, to the influence of the crown in parliament; and also, to corruption! which has taken place in the administration of its government;—all must be reform:

but if the House wish to confine themselves to a part of my motion for the present, that is the state of the representation: I will rejoice that they pledge themselves so far, and shall not hesitate to adopt the amendment, and thank the member who suggested it.

This amendment was finally agreed to, the committee being made a committee of the whole House, and the day appointed for their sitting—Monday fortnight.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL, after stating the necessity of an Alien Bill similar to that passed in Great Britain, being adopted here, moved for leave to bring in one, and presented it; read a first time; and on the motion of Mr. Forbes, ordered to be printed.

Mr. GRATTAN moved for leave to bring in a bill for regulating the coal trade.

Lord KINGSBOROUGH, after stating the peculiar propriety of making absentee land-holders contribute to the exigencies of the government at this crisis of impending war, gave notice that he would move in the committee of ways and means, for an absentee tax.

The plan thrown out by Lord Kingsborough was warmly supported by Colonel Conyngham, who promised his most hearty concurrence.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15, 1793.

The bill for establishing regulations respecting aliens arriving in this kingdom, or resident therein, having been read a second time and committed,

Mr. FORBES said, that he took this opportunity of declaring his hearty approbation of the bill, as a wise and necessary measure which government acted right in bringing forward, as it went to strengthen our union with Great Britain, where a similar bill had passed this session.

Mr. GRATTAN declared his concurrence in opinion with his honourable friend in supporting the bill, which was more necessary here than in England; it was certainly a strong measure, but at the present crisis extremely necessary in this country.

Mr. CURRAN said he was of the same opinion.

Mr. HOBART then rose, and said, that after the discussion of last night, he thought it necessary to give notice, that he should at an early day move the House to take into consideration that part of the Lord Lieutenant's speech, where he recommends the parliament to take into consideration the situation of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom; as also, that when a committee of supply should sit, he would bring forward a measure for modifying the hearth-money tax, so as to render it less burthensome to the poor.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1793.

Mr. GRATTAN reported from the committee appointed to inquire into the coal trade, that the present high price of coals was fraudulent and artificial.

The committee obtained leave to sit, notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, and to summon persons, call for papers, &c.

Mr. MASON reported from the committee appointed to consider the same, that a supply be granted to his Majesty; which being agreed to,

He then moved, that the House resolve itself into a committee on Thursday the 31st of January, to take into consideration the supply to be granted to his Majesty; and also his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's speech;—which were agreed to.

Mr. HOBART moved, that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Monday se'ennight. Agreed to.

Mr. GRATTAN said, I wish to know whether Administration mean to observe their engagement to us the last session of parliament regarding the hearth money? I introduced a motion last session to relieve the poorer class of people from that oppressive tax; I was not then fortunate enough to succeed, but I extracted a promise from Government, that they would, this session, adopt my idea. By the papers, I collect that the Administration are now willing to perform their promise; if so, I shall rejoice.

Sir JOHN PARNEL. Sir, the fact is as the right honourable member has stated it. We did make such an engagement to the member last session, and now we intend to carry that engagement into execution. We had it formerly in intention, and now, though the revenue has fallen, will, notwithstanding, carry it into execution.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he had no objection to the adjournment. All minds will employ this interim in considering the reform of parliament, to which we are all pledged. There are other measures to which I would recommend the attention of gentlemen. There is one relative to the law of libels. I would recommend it to some of the gentlemen of this House to introduce a bill similar to that which has lately passed in England, and so save me the necessity of doing what properly belongs to them.

Mr. BERESFORD congratulated the House upon the unanimity and magnanimity which it was about to display. If, however, the tax was taken off every house which had not one hearth, it would diminish it by two-thirds of its amount; and if the loss was to be made up by an increase on other houses, those that had but two hearths, and who possibly might not be in a much better state, would be taxed at the rate of 6s. which would be 12s. for the two fires. Thus, in relieving one body, they should take care not to lay a heavy imposition upon another; for the class he had mentioned in this case would be obliged to resort to worse habitations, or to dispense with one of their fires.

Mr. CONOLLY professed, that he had made several efforts to exonerate the lower classes from the hearth tax. He had the same idea of the modification of it as he had of the window tax in England, to which the latter was changed in the time of King William. The same that are excepted in England, should be excepted here. If houses of two hearths were taxed 6s. each, it would be encreasing taxation to more than it would bear. He was glad the measure was taken up by the other side, for all he wanted was to see good done, and Administration had his hearty approbation and concurrence.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER acknowledged, that it would be wrong to injure one to benefit another. His idea was not, that houses of two hearths should be highly taxed; but that all houses should be taxed in proportion to the number of their hearths. This was the justice of taxation, as it would be founded on the ability to pay.

Mr. LATOUCHE said, he was for a speedy discussion of the several important subjects that were before the House, as he considered it dangerous to keep up the public mind in suspense. He wished Mr. Hobart to mention a day for consideration of that which regarded the Roman Catholics.

Mr. HOBART mentioned the intended adjournment, and proposed the day after the next meeting of the House.

Mr. TRENCH (of Galway) was well disposed to a modification of the hearth-tax. He vindicated the Roman Catholics from the charge of having fomented sedition in the South. He had been appointed to the chair at a Catholic meeting in Loughrea, in which he could not sit down for the crowds; and men more peaceable, more loyal to their king, or more attached to the constitution, he never saw. He has stood well in his country; he could not tell whether he would do so when the Catholics were emancipated; but it was the call of justice, and private interest must give way.

Mr. DUQUERY applauded Administration for their intentions relative to the hearth-tax. He thought that the House had done more in six days of its sitting than he ever read of in a similar period, to tranquillize the nation, and restore confidence in the House.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE thought that there was ample matter to employ the minds of the people and of members of parliament, to require and justify the proposed recess. He declared himself not pledged on the question of parliamentary reform.

Mr. BUSHE said, in the course of last summer he, had obtained much information on the subject of the hearth-tax, by order of government, which at the proper time he would lay before the House.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH called gentlemen to order. The question of adjournment was before the House, to which none of them had spoken.

Mr. F. HUTCHINSON agreed with the motion. There never was a time of such importance in the country. He thought the existence of the state depended upon the decision of the House, to which the people looked. It would be disgraceful to the House, and injurious to the peace of the kingdom, if the idea was to get abroad, that they were not pledged solemnly to take up the state of the representation of the people.

Mr. ALEXANDER testified for the inhabitants of the North, that they were well affected to the king and constitution, with very few exceptions, which were publicly condemned.

Mr. GRATTAN avowed his intention, after the recess, of submitting to the House a libel bill, like that of Great Britain.

Mr. HOBART avowed, that the Attorney General had such an idea in contemplation.

Mr. FORBES moved for leave to bring in a responsibility bill, and a pension bill.—Granted.

Mr. GRATTAN moved for leave to bring in a bill for the improvement of barren land.—Granted.

Also, for leave to bring in a bill for repealing the existing police laws, affecting Dublin, and for establishing certain regulations relative to said city.

The alien bill was read a third time, and engrossed.

The House adjourned to the 28th instant.

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 1793.

The House met this day, pursuant to adjournment from the 16th.

Mr. VANDELEUR said, that many complaints were made relative to the enormous fees charged by officers of the customs, which in many instances were eight-fold what they were some years since; he moved, "that the proper officer lay before the House an account of the fees charged by the deputies, clerks, &c. of the customs in the port of Dublin, distinguishing by what documents, and by what authority, they are demanded."

Sir H. LANGRISH expressed a fear that it would be impossible to comply with this order, as the fees demanded might be different with different officers, in proportion as they were better skilled in extortion, or as the facility of the merchant might be greater.

Mr. VANDELEUR observed, that this variety of demands, made by the different officers, was the strongest reason for going into the enquiry; and as to the practicability of complying with the order, he said it had been exemplified in one instance where a similar order had been complied with.

After some conversation on the difficulty of fulfilling the order, Mr. Vandeleur changed his motion for the following, "that a committee be appointed to enquire what fees are at present demanded and received by officers in the port of Dublin, and by what authority they are demanded?"

Mr. BERNESFORD feared that the enquiry would not produce the desired effect, as it was not likely that an officer who demanded illegal fees would make the commissioners or the committee acquainted with the fact. He mentioned an instance, where the commissioners conceiving that a complaint had been made against an officer for an illegal demand, had entered into an investigation

of the business; a number of merchants, however, came forward, and declared that they thought the conduct of the officer perfectly proper; the fee which had been spoken of, was, in their opinion; a reasonable and fair one; the officer had not demanded it, if he had, they would not have paid it; but it was given freely for services which they thought deserved it.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that the merchants, in general, were by no means contented with the fees paid to the officers. Several complaints had been made to him by them on that subject. They might not indeed refuse to pay, because the officers might embarrass their business, but it did not follow that they did not think the exorbitant fees charged by those people a grievance.

The motion was agreed to, as well as another motion of Mr. Vandeleur, "that the proper officer lay before the House an account of fees demanded and paid on bounties as specified in a paper (before the House) marked No. I. and amounted to upwards of 7000l."

Mr. G. PONSONBY moved leave to bring in a bill for ascertaining the law of libels. Granted. And Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Grattan appointed to prepare and bring it in.

Mr. VANDELEUR moved, that proper officers do lay before the House, an account of all new places, salaries, and additional salaries in the civil establishment made since Feb. 8, 1792, and the charge incurred by the same. Ordered.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM said, he never felt greater diffidence in rising than at that moment. It had been generally reported, and the report had found its way into the public papers, that Administration had offered to give him a lucrative place or pension. In justice to them, he thought it necessary to declare they had never made him any such offer. Former administrations, indeed, had done so, and his circumstances were such, that he would have accepted the offer, had he been permitted to continue independent. Though he had received, however, neither place nor pension for himself, yet some friends of his family had solicited some mark of favour for his sons, and his Majesty had been graciously pleased to bestow on them a small pension. His sons, he said, were worthy of royal and of public favour, and the pension they had received, he rather considered as a recompense for the loss of 1000l. per annum, which he had sustained for his conduct in that house, for giving a vote which had saved his country many thousands a year—than in consideration of his parliamentary support of the present administration. He had been accused with supporting them; he gloried in supporting them; and while they acted as they did, he would always support them. He thought that the wisdom and

steadiness of their counsels had saved this country from anarchy and confusion. Sir Edward concluded by moving, leave to bring in a bill to regulate weights and measures and the assize of bread in the county of Dublin. Leave granted—and Sir Edward, Mr. Day, and Mr. Finlay appointed to prepare and bring it in.

A message from the Lords with the alien bill, without any amendment; also the indemnification bill with some amendments, which were agreed to.

Mr. M. BERESFORD presented a petition from the bakers of Dublin, praying an increase to the allowance made to them by an act of the 17th and 18th of his present Majesty. That allowance, the petition stated, was ten shillings on the quarter of wheat, which they alledge to be insufficient, in consequence of the increased price of every article necessary to the trade. The petition was received, and referred to a committee, which was appointed and empowered to examine in the most solemn manner.

Hon. Mr. KNOX presented a petition from the Protestant inhabitants of the borough of Dungannon, complaining of the imperfect state of the representation, and praying a radical reform.

Mr. CHARLES O'NEIL said, the prayer of the petition should be, that the borough of Dungannon be more adequately represented.

Mr. STEWART (of Killimoon) moved, that the petition should be referred to the committee appointed to take into consideration the state of the representation, which is to sit on Monday next.

Mr. CORRY, supposing that Mr. O'Neil had meant an allusion to the representative for Dungannon, paid some very handsome compliments to the character and family of one of those gentlemen; he hoped the gentlemen on the other side, whose intended sacrifice to a reform in parliament, had procured them so much honour, might be as sincere as the gentleman alluded to. He concluded by declaring his concurrence of the motion, and his good wishes to a parliamentary reform.

Mr. O'NEIL, declared upon his honour, he had not meant to allude in any manner whatsoever to either of the representatives for Dungannon; he only meant that the people of Dungannon, which he understood was a close borough, ought to be more adequately represented, and that he thought it the peculiar province of those people to pray that their representation should be amended.

The petition was received, and referred to the committee on the representation, agreeably to Mr. Stewart's motion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL called the attention of the House to what he considered a very gross libel on their character and dignity. He then produced the Hibernian Journal of Friday last, in which, he said, were some resolutions, purporting to be the resolutions of an aggregate meeting of the citizens of Dublin, and which were signed by Henry Hutton, one of the high sheriffs of the city. Two of those only he thought worthy the attention of the House. One of them containing an assertion, "that the House of Commons is not freely chosen by the people; the other, "that the House as at present influenced by places of emolument, and pensions, do not speak the sense of the people." After saying a few words by way of animadversion on these resolutions, he moved, that Thomas M'Donnell, the printer of said paper, do attend at the bar of the House to-morrow.

Sir H. CAVENDISH moved an amendment, that the words "in custody" be added. The resolutions, he said, contained a gross violation of the privileges of the House, which were the privileges of the people intrusted to their care. In cases where such violations had been committed, it had always been the parliamentary usage to order the offender to the bar in custody.

Mr. FORBES said, no man was more attached to the privileges of the House than he, because he thought they involved the most material interests of the people. Yet he would recommend it to them to conduct themselves in the present instance with temperance. The honourable bart. had said, that when a privilege of the House was violated, it was parliamentary usage to order the offender into custody. To this doctrine he had subscribed last session without sufficient examination, but researches he had made into the records of parliament since that time had convinced him that it was not the established and permanent usage of parliament, for authorities might be found on both sides; he therefore again advised the House to proceed with moderation, and to venture on no step in which they were not perfectly sure they were right.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL professed himself not much skilled in parliamentary order, but was inclined to think it would be sufficiently soon to order him into custody when he should have appeared at the bar, if he could not then say any thing to convince the House either that the matters alluded to were not libellous, or that he was not the printer, &c. If the usage of parliament, therefore, were not clearly against him, he would persevere in his motion, that he attend at the bar, but not in custody.

Mr. M. BERESFORD observed, that it would have been right that he should attend in custody, had the matter been shewn to be libelous, but as it had been read by the Attorney General as part

of his speech, to order him into custody, would he thought, be premature.

Hon. D. BROWNE was against Mr. M'Donnell's attendance in custody, and spoke of the necessity of supporting the dignity of parliament.

Sir HENRY withdrew his amendment.

Mr. G. PONSONBY professed himself as much attached to the privileges and dignity of the House as any man; but he could not think it was the law of parliament that a man should be ordered into custody without being proved guilty of any crime; for it would be inconsistent with justice and common sense. The honourable bart. who had stated this, as the law of parliament, had said that the House had been insulted by its own members within, as well as by others without the walls; for his own part, he knew of no such insult having been offered, and he thought the best that could be said of the honourable baronet's declaration, was, that it was indiscreet and unmerited.

Mr. EGAN advised the House to overlook this little insult. Public bodies, he said, like individuals, should be secure in the consciousness of their innocence, and in that consciousness should be invulnerable. The well known purity and integrity of the House would prevent those slanders from hurting them in public estimation. The Attorney General, he said, had a great deal of this kind of business depending on his hands since the last session; if the House should throw all the citizens of Dublin on the right honourable gentleman to prosecute, he would possibly be out of office before he could dispatch them, and then they might fall into hands not so well calculated by lenience to transact business of that kind.

Mr. CUFFE said, he thought this was a time when, instead of suffering such publications to pass unnoticed, they ought to be particularly attended to.

Mr. GRATTAN recommended it to the right honourable gentleman to consider whether this was a proper time to commit himself, with a large part of his Majesty's subjects, on the integrity of that House. Were he to agree with the other side of the House, he should say that the motion was improper, and that the resolutions were no libel, since that side of the House had repeatedly declared the fact which the resolutions specify. They had avowed influence, and pleaded the necessity of it. They themselves had insulted the House. If the right honourable gentleman wishes to avoid insult he would tell him the way;—let him act like an honest man! For him, he most sincerely wished that the House should be respected, and therefore it was that he wished a radical

and effectual reform to take place; for whatever strong means the House may take to prevent insult, as long as a majority of them consisted of placed and pensioned men, the people would think that the House was influenced.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH asked whether the right honourable gentleman, meant to insinuate that he did not act like an honest man. If he knew his own heart, he acted in that House from conscience, and was as honest a man as the right honourable gentleman.

Mr. CURRAN was for preserving the dignity of parliament; and therefore wished not to see that dignity descend from its high station, to animadvert on every little paragraph in a public newspaper. He wondered that the expression of his right honourable friend, should have been understood to allude to any gentleman but as a member of that House. As addressed to them in that capacity, he thought it the best advice that could be given. The House of Commons consisted of men; and if they would be respected, he repeated it, they must act as honest men.

The motion then passed; and Mr. M'Donnell was ordered to attend at the bar to-morrow.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29, 1793.

Mr. Secretary HOBART rose to inform the House, that he had to communicate his Majesty's most gracious answer to the address of that House; which was to the following effect:

"His Majesty thanks the Commons for their dutiful and loyal address; and he feels most sensibly their expressions of attachment to his government, family, and person, and of their determination to support him, in carrying into effect whatever honourable engagements he had entered into, respecting the faith of treaties; and he relies on the wisdom of their deliberations, to adopt such measures as would tend to enforce a due obedience of the laws, the maintenance of the public peace, and to cement, in a general union of sentiments, his subjects in this kingdom, of every description, in support of the established constitution."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he was informed that Mr. M'Donnell, the printer and proprietor of the Hibernian Journal, against whom he had brought a charge for publishing, in his

paper, a libel on the privileges of that House, was then attending at the bar, pursuant to an order of yesterday.

And Mr. M'Donnell being called to the bar,

The **SPEAKER** asked him, what he had to say in his defence?

The Clerk of the House having come to the bar, with the paper which contained the resolutions that laid the foundation for which Mr. M'Donnell had been called to the bar, he acknowledged that he was the printer and proprietor of that paper.

Mr. M'Donnell, in justification of himself, said, that these resolutions were sent to him, authenticated under the signature of one of the high sheriffs of this city, and that the sheriff had authorized him to say, that he had signed them as chairman of the meeting, and was ready to avow it, if called upon.

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL**, after a speech of some length, moved, that Mr. Thomas M'Donnell has been guilty of a breach of the privileges of this House, and that he be taken into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

Mr. **FORBES** was astonished at such proceedings, and wanted to know what the gentlemen, on that side of the House, would propose by it in the conclusion. He would, by the blessing of God, resist such motions while he had the honour of a seat in that House. If they should be carried, a seat was not worth possessing in it. Upon the reading, the resolutions were so far from seditious or libellous, that none could be produced more loyal or constitutional; they were also to convey the sense of the freemen and freeholders of the capital to their constituents; and yet, the motion, the severest that could be thought of, went to involve an innocent printer, and pass by the principals. We must ever prevent public debate on constitutional points, if things of this nature were to be impeached and prosecuted. They were from an authorised association, not a convention, wherein an individual elected himself into the situation of a temporary censor; they were from a meeting legally convened. He produced the resolutions of the county of Berks, in 1780, passing a censure on expenditure of the public money: this was the resolution of a delegated body, with the famous Mr. Wyvill at their head. It has been asserted, twenty times in this House, that there are too many placemen and pensioners have seats in it. In the reign of Edw. III. it was complained of as a disgrace to the House of Commons, to have so many placemen and pensioners, and a requisition was, therefore, made that

they be removed. He said, a more imprudent question could not be now discussed by the House. Parliament was wrong last year, and ought to take care now, for fear of being never trusted; let it be upon their head; he would not pledge himself rashly, but he put them in mind, that men, who had merited of the country, exhorted them to pay due deference to public sentiment.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, it came to the difference between individuals and the entire House; but the higher the authority, the greater the crime. We were moving on, under our parliament, to an accumulated progression of prosperity, the conduct of parliament, therefore, did not warrant the expression of its "not being free." The English postpone experiment to the hour of safety; this country is differently situated; yet a single insult, such as this, can never be mischievous; but it is necessary to curb the spirit, in the present instance, to prevent disturbance. It was different to direct the representative how he should act, and to publish a libel on the parliament.

Mr. CURRAN lamented the business was at all brought forward, not only from his Majesty's recommendation, at the beginning of the session, but even what was read this very evening. We are put off from the discussion of a great measure, because a westerly wind blew away an Irish clerk; a measure, to which the people look with the most earnest expectation, is postponed, because we must hear, first, the sentiments of another country. [A cry of no! no! from the other side.] It was an honour to disavow such considerations. The publication was not from a low anonymous author, but from a legal and avowed assembly. If a petition from the people at large came, stating the same grievance, he asked would they punish the presenters? At this moment a man was not punishable for authorised truth. The measure was to refuse "in limine," or baffle, in detail, the claims of the people, with whom it was necessary to be respectable. In a moment when the value of public integrity was most to be looked to, and when it was most necessary, to guard against committing the repose of the people, we were troubled with peevish and little measures. He, therefore, moved the question of adjournment.

Mr. HARDY, in a very able speech, supported the motion of adjournment.

Mr. BUSHE called upon the House, in the name of the peace of the country, to censure the publication, if they did not wish to be in the situation of a country where loyalty led the van, and assassination closed up the rear.

Dr. BROWNE (of the College) said, there were two bodies in this country, one of which would wish to overturn every thing, and another which was for a temperate reform. It was not proper to irritate the people, by bringing forward the printer of a loyal and innocent publication. Why did not Government prosecute more flagrant publications? Was it in consequence of orders from another quarter that they went into this measure, to prevent a reform? They could not prevent a reform, but may produce a civil war.

Mr. DUQUERY said, that allowing a right of assembling was conceding the whole of the argument. This paragraph was only exceptionable as having circulated through the mass of the people. He saw a great deal of danger in the proceeding. The publication was not unauthorized, and he would be content never to speak in the House, if the matter in hand was not given up.

Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL declared, the motion of adjournment would be well adopted, were it to extricate the House from the present difficulty; but Parliament would not, indeed, be free and independent, if they departed without voting a censure on this publication. The Parliament, from which great things were expected, was not to be degraded. It was the fashion to degrade the executive authority, in order to make it despicable. From the Roman story it may be known, that from the time the multitude became despotic, "*Legem rogare*," was "*Legem ferre*." The word *radical* crept into every publication, like Doctor Laet's cure for the tooth-ache; the radical cure for Parliament must be to lug it out by the roots. No one could say, that the publication was not an instance of high and insolent contempt.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE wished, that the business could be passed over, but the times would not admit of it. He represented in strong colours the misery of France.

Mr. CONOLLY was for terminating the business in a quiet manner. The *quo animo* was to be considered; and therefore, as the printer was innocent, he ought not to be punished.

Mr. WILLIAM PONSONBY and Mr. GRAYDON were for adjournment, and considered the publication innocent.

Colonel CONYNGHAM was sorry there was not more unanimity. The language in the House was the cause of public discontent. The publication was a flagrant violation of the confidence that was due to Parliament.

Mr. GRATTAN said, they stood in a much more disgraceful situation than they imagined, and were now in a very serious predicament. Attempts were made to involve the King's government with the volunteers; with the loyal and the innocent. They did not, according to his Majesty's instructions, endeavour to unite the people; they were for rebuking his Majesty's capital for its loyalty; they were for defending their places, not his Majesty's government.

After a debate, which continued until half after twelve, the House divided. For the adjournment, 70; against it, 154.

Tellers for the ayes, Mr. Curran and Mr. Forbes;—tellers for the noes, Mr. Welley.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then moved, that the said publication, in asserting that the House of Commons is not free and independent, contains a libel on the House, and is a violation of the privileges thereof; which was agreed to.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 30, 1793.

Being the anniversary of the martyrdom of King Charles I. the House immediately on its meeting adjourned, and attended divine service at St. Andrew's Church.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 1793.

The order of the day, for taking into consideration the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council's proclamation of the eighth of December last, for dispersing all unlawful assemblies, and for preventing seditious associations, being read, and the proclamation being read by the clerk at the table,

Lord HEADFORT, after paying a compliment to the conduct of Administration, as to the measures which they had pursued, in respect to the proclamation just now read, and which, he hoped, would meet with the sanction of Parliament; adverted to the circumstance of a corps of volunteers, having attempted last Sunday to array and parade in arms, but which was prevented by the interposition of Government, who sent a magistrate to dissuade them from it, and to warn them of the predicament they would bring themselves into, moved the following resolution:

“ Resolved, That an address of thanks be presented, from this House, to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, for communicating to this House the proclamation which his excellency had issued, and for the vigilance and attention which his excellency had manifested, to preserve the public tranquillity; and that we applaud the wisdom of his excellency, in separating those who so laudably associated for the purposes of defending this country from foreign invasion, as well as to preserve domestic tranquillity, from those whose declared objects are tumult, disaffection and sedition; and to assure his excellency, that we will concur in such measures as will carry the said proclamation into effect.”

Mr. PRENDERGAST SMYTH seconded the motion.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY approved of the address; at the same time he wished that a line of distinction should be made between the old volunteer corps and any modern corps, who might make use of any disaffected emblems. These he deprecated in the strongest terms, and to the utmost of his power he should oppose them. He wished that the circumstance of a magistrate going, last Sunday, to the parade of the Goldsmiths corps, had not been adverted to, for from every information he had received, that was a corps which never merited any reprehension.

Mr. Secretary HOBART read a summons from the Goldsmiths corps; also the address from the Society of United Irishmen to the Volunteers of Ireland; likewise the resolutions entered into, at a meeting of delegates from several of the Dublin volunteer corps. He said, that from those resolutions those corps come within the description and meaning of the proclamation; as to the circumstance of last Sunday, information had been received that the Goldsmith's corps intended to parade and appear in arms. Directions were given to a magistrate to caution them against it, but, he said, there was no intention to call out the military in aid of the magistrate, except in case of its becoming necessary. He accounted why this proclamation had not been laid earlier before Parliament; and, he said, it was a matter of great satisfaction to him to find, that the conduct of Administration, in this business, had met with the approbation of gentleman on the other side of the House.

Mr. PONSONBY said, what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman who spoke last, made it necessary for him to say a few words; he begged he might by no means be understood as giving any degree of approbation to a plan for dispersing the volunteers. He thought that no meeting should or could legally be considered as seditious or tumultuous, where no act

of illegality was committed or likely to be committed; as to the address he heartily approved of it, as the proclamation went only to suppress associations, entertaining seditious views; so far as any gentleman shall prove that any old volunteer corps entertains similar views, so far he would be against them, but no farther. He would not, therefore, be drawn in, by approving this address, to censure the old and laudable volunteer corps, on charges of guilt merely implicative; until they should have done something illegal, or made it probable that they were about to do it, he would by no means agree in any kind of censure on them.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM was of opinion, that if the principles avowed in the papers which had been read, were sanctioned or tolerated by the House, there was an end of every thing valuable. The general tendency of those papers, he said, could not but call the attention of the House, to the transactions that were passing in a neighbouring kingdom. He was happy that an honourable gentleman [Mr. Ponsonby] had spoken his approbation of the address so strongly; for if the people were suffered to imitate those principles, or carry them into execution, they would not know where to stop.

The Hon. DENIS BROWN said, I shall certainly vote for the address, convinced as I am, there never were proceedings that called more for the attention of Government, than those that have been now read to you: they have ruined the public and private credit of this country. I call the attention of my honourable friend to the origin of the volunteer corps of the last war; they were embodied for the purpose of defence from external invasion and internal commotion. When the war was ended, they became legislators, and they were judged dangerous to the liberties of the country. The present associations seem to begin where the late volunteers concluded, declaring the purpose of their assembling to dictate, with arms, to the legislature. If this be the means by which the state is to be reformed, I prophesy that the effect will be a radical reform; that life, property, and talent will fall into one indiscriminate grave of anarchy, murder, and destruction. Let Government act constitutionally and firmly, and they will have the people with them; they will have the same interest with them; and for my part, while they act so, I will support them at the risk of my life and fortune, pledges which I will hazard, to prevent their certain loss.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER thought that warmth of debate, on this subject, might ruin the country. Enough had now been said, to shew that the act of Government met the approbation of the House. He never shunned debate merely

on account of himself; but on this occasion he deprecated debate for the good of the country.

A loud cry of question! question! now took place, which, however, ceased; when Mr. GRATTAN rose, and said,

I approve of the proclamation as much as I condemn the use which the minister now attempts to make of it. The proclamation arraigned a certain body of men, whom it describes to be an association assuming devices and emblems of disaffection. The minister applies that to the volunteers of the city and the county; under that colour proposes to disperse them; and in order to justify that project, he produces a formal charge; that charge is confined to two heads; first, a summons purporting to be that of the corps of Goldsmiths, reciting that the delegates of the corps were to assemble, to celebrate the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the French victory in the low countries, and inciting the Goldsmith's corps to attend. I do not ask how far it was perfectly discreet to celebrate such an event, particularly if we consider the consequences to which such an event might possibly lead; but I ask, was it a ground for dismissing the volunteers? Do ministers mean to say, that they will disperse all the volunteers of Ireland, who celebrate the French victories in Brabant. I ask, also, of any man who can read, whether such a celebration brings these obnoxious corps within the description of the proclamation? Whether such a celebration was assuming the ensign or devices of disaffection? And it is the more obvious that such an event was not judged by the council who signed the proclamation; a good reason for including the corps of the city, because after that event had taken place, it expressly excepted them; it has saved the laudable associations, under the description of the old volunteers, and has confined the proclamation to the national guard. The style of the summons has given offence; if ministers do not approve of it; it begins, Citizen soldiers; they are French terms, or rather terms of French soppery, below our imitation. The date has, also, given offence; the last year, or the last moment of slavery! Here again is the French style or frippery introduced; but is that or the other expression, or both, sufficient ground for the minister to disperse the corps, or is it such an offence as comes within the description of the proclamation? No man who reads, can say it is. The minister, himself, aware that his first charge was insufficient, has produced another. He has read a long address from a society called the United Irishmen, inviting the people of Ireland to assemble in a national convention, and containing an abundance of other matter; and he then produces a succession of resolutions from some of the corps of Dublin, one of which resolutions returns thanks to the Society of United Irishmen. Without giving any kind of approbation of the matter

of that address, I must say, that I think a minister would be highly indiscreet and presumptuous who should say, that the volunteers, had by those thanks, brought themselves within the description of the proclamation, or that they were guilty of assuming emblems and devices of disaffection; as little should I think him justified in dispersing merely on account of those thanks. If so, you give the minister a right to disperse every volunteer corps in the city and county, if he do not approve of their politics now, though in the many resolutions which young men may adopt, some will be, and many were exceptionable, yet I would not wish to establish over them in the minister an authority to take away their arms, if he disapproves of their politics. I know the evil use that he will make of that power, and the dangerous consequences and confusion to which it leads. Permit me to ask this right honourable gentleman, who has arraigned the old volunteer corps, is it his intention to multiply volunteers? If so, I apprehend he is adopting the means; if the city and county corps are not intimidated, but encrease by the attempts of the Government to disperse them. If they stand to their arms and are supported by their brethren, what becomes of his project? But if, on the other hand, they should disperse in the capital, does he imagine the volunteers will be deterred in the North? He ought to prove that the way to recruit for volunteers in the North, was to attack them in the city. They will consider his attack as an affront, and think that the cause of a part, is the cause of the whole. The minister is, therefore, doing the very thing which he wishes to prevent; he is provoking a general armament; he is doing more, he is detaching that armament from Parliament. In his charge against the volunteers he has mentioned a national convention. I hope this House will, by reforming the Parliament, prevent such an assembly, the consequences of which may be very unfortunate; but if the minister wishes to give such an assembly an army at its back, he is taking the method, by committing this House as well as himself, with the volunteers, and attempting to detach them from the established constitution. The object of the right honourable mover, in 1779, of resolutions of thanks to the volunteers, was to attach them to the House of Commons. I think the object was a right one; that of the minister now is to detach them from the House. I think his object is an evil one, and the manner in which the minister proceeds, convicts him of imprudence. He does not in this proclamation venture to arraign the old corps; he does not in the address approving of the proclamation, attempt to arraign them; on the contrary, they are the objects of commendation in both, but when he comes to speak, he departs from the address and proclamation, and proposes such an interpretation of both, or goes against the spirit and letter of either, and such as would enable him to disperse the old corps, under

the seeming approbation of this House. Thus does he endeavour to lead this House much farther than it intends, making the House at once praise the old corps, and then putting such a comment on that praise, as amounts to a proposal to disperse them for disaffection. I, therefore, desire, in giving my approbation to the proclamation, to be distinctly understood. I approve of it, because it did propose to disperse the national guard, and because it did not propose to disperse the volunteers.

A member lamented that the debate had taken place, as it made it necessary for him to declare, that the corps which had adopted the resolutions he had heard, should be discouraged.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL had never heard any thing with more pleasure, than what had now fallen from gentlemen. He hoped from the sentiments they expressed, that there would have been no difference of opinion on this subject, however they might differ on others. He thought the peace of the country much depended on the manner in which this address should pass; he feared that there were designing men in the country and in the metropolis, whose object was to subvert our happiest of constitutions. The paper which had been read to-night, he thought, proved it. If any thing should pass, in the course of the debate, that might countenance them, no man could tell what might follow. He professed the highest respect for the old volunteers; he remembered with gratitude their services to the country, in preserving it from foreign invasion, and in a state of internal tranquillity. But the oldness of a corps could not sanction it, if it adopted new and dangerous principles; nor should the newness of a corps procure its suppression, if its aims were legal and salutary. If the old corps are to be inviolable, however they may degenerate, the members of the National Battalion have only to throw off their trowsers, and assume the uniform of an old corps, and they secure impunity to their most dangerous principles. No corps should, he agreed, be suppressed, if they did not adopt the principles of those which were censured; but if any should adopt them, they ought to be put down, however old they might be. Three corps had adopted the principles of the proclamation, published by the United Irishmen; of those, the Goldsmiths was one. Hence he thought the proclamation extended to them. As to their summons, no man, he said, could doubt but it was seditious in itself; and he mentioned a case, where two men were sentenced to confinement for two years, for circulating in court hand-bills dated, The last year of slavery.

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) said, he knew no words in the English language, that more strongly expressed approbation,

than those by which the volunteers were described in the proclamation and the address. If any set of men take up principles different from the original volunteers, the name of volunteers could not belong to them. In agreeing to the address, he would not be understood, as disapproving in any manner of the old corps throughout the kingdom, nor of those of the county and city of Dublin; he thought the Goldsmiths were particularly entitled to praise, for dispersing at the instance of the magistrate.

LORD EDWARD FITZGERALD now rose, and in a very vehement tone declared—I give my most hearty disapprobation to that address, for I do think that the Lord Lieutenant and the majority of this House are the worst subjects the King has."

A loud cry of "to the bar," and "take down his words," immediately echoed from every part of the House. The House was cleared in an instant, and strangers were not re-admitted for nearly three hours.

He was admitted to explain himself, and on his explaining, the House

"Resolved, *nem. con.*

"That the excuse offered by the Right Hon. Edward Fitzgerald, commonly called Lord Edward Fitzgerald, for the said words so spoken, is unsatisfactory and insufficient."

Ordered, that Lord Edward Fitzgerald do attend at the bar to-morrow.

The address was agreed to unanimously.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1793.

MR. CORRY presented a petition from the merchants, manufacturers, and dealers in tobacco of Newry; stating, that smuggling in that article had arisen to such an height, as to threaten the ruin of the fair trader; that the great increase of smuggling in this article, was owing to the high duties on it; and praying that they might be reduced.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that an application of the same kind would be made by the trades of Dublin; and the Commissioners of Revenue were of opinion that the reduction ought to take place. He had no objection; but he hoped it would be remembered at a future period, if the reduction of the duty should produce any considerable diminution of the revenue, that the high duties were given up to the wishes of the people.

He did not intend to move any new tax this session in place of the duties, but it might at a future day be necessary to do so.

Mr. GRATTAN was about to speak, when Sir John Blaquiére called the attention of the House to a noble lord [Lord Edward Fitzgerald] who was waiting at the bar, in order to make an apology for his breach of order on the foregoing night; he hoped the House would postpone its other business in compliment to their member, till they should have heard him.

The House was now cleared, and strangers were not re-admitted for upwards of two hours. This interval, it seems, was occupied by a debate on the sufficiency of Lord Edward's apology; a division finally took place on it, when we learned the numbers were,

For receiving the apology, - 135 — Against it, - 55

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER made his sweeping motion in exclusion of all grants to manufactories, churches, piers, &c. &c. and also some other motions of course, which were agreed to; after which the House adjourned.

Mr. HOBART said, that he had given notice a few days ago, for entering into consideration of that part of the Lord Lieutenant's speech which related to the Roman Catholics. He had now to request their indulgence further, until Monday next. He would have mentioned this earlier in the night, if he had had an opportunity; he had, however, communicated it to gentlemen privately, on both sides of the House. Another question stood for that day; but he hoped there would be no objection to postpone it for a short time. However, it lay with the gentlemen who meant to bring it forward.

Mr. Thomas M'Donell, printer of the Hibernian Journal, was brought to the bar; and on receiving a reprimand from the Speaker, was discharged.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1793.

This being the day appointed for going into a state of the nation.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose and said, the peculiar circumstances of the times, the probability of this country's being engaged in a war, and the actual decrease of revenue, made it incumbent on him, standing in the situation of responsibility which he possessed, to submit in the most undisguised and explicit manner to the House, the situation of the public revenue and the public expenditure; hoping, that when gentlemen on all

sides were convinced that strict regard was had to economy, and that the deficiency of the present income, and the necessity of future resources, arose from circumstances which no care of Government could possibly avert, they would join with ministers in putting the revenue and the forces of the country upon such a respectable footing, that, though some extraordinary expence might thereby be incurred at the moment, yet it would prevent much mischief, and eventually prove the most saving plan that could be adopted. That the subject, therefore, might be perfectly understood, and that gentlemen might have time to give it due consideration, he would for the present lay before them the situation of the kingdom, and on a future day would propose such means as appeared to him most likely to conduce to its safety and prosperity.

He accordingly moved, that the House resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to consider of the supply granted to his Majesty;—which being done, and the Right Hon. Mr. Mason having taken the chair,

The Chancellor of the Exchequer proceeded to state the receipts and disbursements of the nation at great length; from whence it appeared that until Lady-day last, the country was going on in the most prosperous manner, her trade every day encreasing, her revenues rising; but from that period trade had seemed to droop, and there was an actual defalcation of revenue when compared with the same portion of the year preceding of 45,000*l.* this defalcation owing to the disturbed state of the public mind which had been agitated by inflammatory writings, to the decline of trade, and to taxes being raised so high on some articles, foreign spirits for instance, as to produce little or no revenue at all; and on others, sugar particularly, as greatly to reduce the revenue formerly arising from that article. As the national revenue had fallen, the national expence had encreased; the bread-money lately granted to the army, and which he was sure no man in the nation grudged, would make an expence of more than 30,000*l.* per ann.—canals since Lady-day last had taken 18,000*l.* extra.—the bounty on corn was 48,000*l.* a sum nearly equal to the whole of the preceding year's expence, on that head; the fishing bounties had greatly increased; public buildings and a variety of other circumstances, all contributed to leave a large *deficit*. The demands of the next year, he stated as much more considerable than those of the last: the army was to be encreased; the country was to be put into a state of defence; an encampment would perhaps be necessary; a militia was to be arrayed, former deficiencies were to be made good; all which must be provided for, and if they were determined to take the hearth-money off a certain description of houses, it would be also necessary to make provision for that deficiency.

Mr. FORBES desired the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state the plan of militia which government intended to adopt, together

with the estimate of the expence: to which the Chancellor replied, that the plan was not yet ready.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, lastly, proceeded to state the means by which he hoped to provide for the accruing expences:

First, by such a modification of the present taxes as would make some of them more operative.

Secondly, by a loan,

Thirdly, by a lottery,

Fourthly, by a vote of credit which Government might, or might not use, as exigency should or should not require.

A lottery taken by itself he considered as a measure highly beneficial to the country: first, it was a tax voluntarily paid, and of which two-thirds were paid from other nations; and next, it prevented every year the borrowing of 200,000*l.* because the purchase of each succeeding year's lottery paid the prizes of the year preceding. It was true it induced a most abominable species of gambling and swindling, under the name of insurance; but this he hoped to see abolished by prohibiting insurance altogether; and he had even reason to hope that instead of injuring, this would help the sale of the lottery, for the money heretofore thrown away on insurance, would not be expended in purchasing tickets.

A member observed, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not mentioned the tax on absentees as a source of supply. If the country was to go to great expence in defending the property of those persons who chose to absent themselves from it, and thereby deprive it of the advantage of their personal services, nothing could possibly be more just and equitable than they should by a tax contribute to its defence.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, without going into the propriety of such a tax, he would not think himself justified in proposing it as a source of supply, because it was very uncertain whether it would be adopted, being several times already rejected by the House, and even if it should be adopted, its produce would for some time be so uncertain that it could not fairly be reckoned upon as a permanent fund.

The committee adjourned to Tuesday.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1793.

Mr. OGLE presented the report of the committee appointed to take into consideration the petition of J. Jones, and others, (the

proprietors of the Ferries) which was received, read and referred to the Committee of Supply.

Mr. GRATTAN wished that, as a question of great expectation was likely to be agitated this night, the Committee of Parliamentary Reform might be adjourned to Tuesday; he did not mean to debate the subject even then, but he hoped to be able then to offer some reasons for postponing it still longer, though not to a very distant period.

The committee was accordingly ordered to sit on that day.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART rose to present to the House the petition of certain Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland and others, on behalf of themselves and their fellow-subjects of the same persuasion. Though I am happy in having the opportunity of laying this petition before the House; yet, nevertheless, I do not consider myself pledged to agree with the petitioners in the fullest extent of their desire; when the subject comes regularly before the House, I will state my sentiments more at large; at present I will not trouble the House any further than requesting that the petition may be read.

The petition was then read as follows:

“ The petition of John Thomas Troy, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin; Dominick Bellew, Roman Catholic Bishop of Killala; Richard O'Reilly, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ulster; Thomas Bray, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel; Richard McCormick, Thomas Fitzgerald, Edward Byrne, Thomas Warren, Denis Thomas O'Brien, Valentine O'Connor, Hugh Hamill, Christopher Bellew, and several others, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and the rest of the Catholics of Ireland; setting forth, that the petitioners are subject to a variety of severe and oppressive laws, inflicting on them disabilities and disqualifications unknown to any other description of his Majesty's subjects, the further continuation of which they humbly conceive their dutiful demeanor and unremitting loyalty for above one hundred years, must evince to be equally impolitic and unnecessary; that this system of injurious exclusion has operated not less to the particular depression of the Catholics of Ireland, than to the general obstruction of the true and manifest interests of the country; the petitioners therefore humbly pray, that the House may be pleased to take the whole of their case into consideration, and in conformity to the benign wishes of his Majesty, for the union of all his people in sentiment, affection, and interest, to restore the petitioners to the rights and privileges of the constitution of the country.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said,—I rise to observe as to the signatures, that I wish the word *titular* had been prefixed to the word *bishop*; I submit it to the friends of the Roman Catholics, to all those who wish to extend privileges to them, whether these signatures should stand as they were?—They assume a title which did not belong to them, a title which the laws of the country could by no means recognize; nor do I think the words Roman Catholic do away my objection. However, if this objection could be done away, I will not be adverse to having the petition laid on the table.

Nothing was said in support of the objection urged by Sir Henry; of course it fell to the ground.

The petition was received, and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. HOBART proceeded.—Sir, in venturing to obtrude my sentiments on the House, in a subject of such magnitude, I feel the necessity of soliciting from the House, a degree of indulgence which I have no right to expect. I will, however, attempt to discharge what I feel to be my duty, and, in doing so, I hope gentlemen will believe that I am acting in such a manner as appears most likely to me to consult and to promote the interest of the kingdom.

On the first day of the session I explained my conduct with respect to the Roman Catholics. I will not now repeat what I then said; I will only say, that at all times I acquiesced in whatever measures the House thought proper to adopt. It was on that account, that when the Catholics had before applied to me, I was unwilling to hold out to them a vain hope, lest that hope, frustrated should produce an agitation in the public mind, which could not but be mischievous to the public peace.

I am aware that what I have to propose to the House respecting those people to-night, might not possibly meet the general concurrence of gentlemen. It is not my wish or my intention to press any thing upon the House that would not meet general approbation; it is my wish to acquiesce in whatever gentlemen may think the interest of the country; but for my own part, I beg leave to say, that I will never offer any thing to their discussion in which I do not think myself warranted by just policy and sound discretion, much less such subjects as are likely to produce heat and agitation in the country.

I am aware that many of those gentlemen whom I most respect, are not likely to concur in the measures I would propose; but in this point I trust that I differ from them for the real advantage of the country. I am also aware that in the last session of parliament a petition for the very measure I shall now propose had been rejected, and that I myself had voted for that rejection; but I declare, that under the same circumstances, I would again vote for its rejection; it is now evident to every man that the sentiments

of the country on this subject have materially altered since that time; and it is also well known, that at that time the opinion of the country was not ripe for such a measure. The circumstances of the present time would, I think, justify a very material alteration in the sentiments of this House.

The conduct of the Roman Catholics has proved that they were perfectly attached to the constitution; and at this particular period, every man who was attached to the constitution should receive encouragement from this House. I trust such will ever be their conduct, and such will ever be the encouragement received by men attached to the constitution. I do not wish to go more at large into the subject, when I consider how many gentlemen of great abilities there are who understand it so much better than I possibly can; I will therefore briefly state the outline of my intentions, hoping that in them I will be honoured by the concurrence of the House.

My first object, and what the Roman Catholics seem to have at heart, is the right of voting at elections for members of parliament; this I wish to have restored to them. Many opinions have been maintained with respect to the limitations under which this right should be extended to Roman Catholics; but under all the circumstances of the times and of the case, I would recommend the unlimited extension of this franchise; by this the main object would be better answered, and I think it more becoming the House either not to grant at all, or to grant liberally.

If this extension would be dangerous to Protestants, they should not offer it, but as there is no such danger as can warrant their refusal of it. I hope you will concur in granting it without limitation, for if there were any reserve or limitation, there would still remain a sore place in the Roman Catholic mind.

For this purpose, it will be necessary to repeal a clause in the 1st of Geo. II. and I also beg leave to mention, that this will extend to permitting Roman Catholics to vote in cities and towns corporate for magistrates.

The next proposition would be to repeal the 6th of Anne, so far as prohibits Papists from being grand jurors, unless there are not a sufficient number of Protestant freeholders to serve.

The next would be to repeal the 29th of Geo. II. so far as allowing a challenge against any Papist on a petit jury, in causes where a Protestant and Papist are the parties.

I also would propose, that his Majesty might be empowered and authorised to enable the Roman Catholics to endow a college or university, and schools.

That the laws which prevent them from carrying arms, should be so far repealed as to persons possessing a certain degree of property; but by no means so as to put arms into the hands of the lower order of the people.

As the army and navy, it is in the contemplation of the government of England, to admit Roman Catholics to bear commissions in these departments of the state; and that in due time measures for the same purpose would be proposed here, when a communication with the English government should have been had upon this point.

As to civil offices, I wish Roman Catholics may be enabled to hold them; but in this instance I will suggest the propriety of necessary limitations.

I understand that Roman Catholics labour still under some severities with respect to personal property; these I believe to be merely accidental, and to exist from inadvertence, and these I would propose to repeal.

In thus endeavouring to bring forward such measures as were likely to carry into effect his Majesty's recommendation to Parliament, I hope and trust that I am acting for the advantage of the country; and in conformity to that disposition which Government had manifested to meet the wishes of the people. Government has proved it by having in this session, taken up the idea of relieving the lower order of people from the hearth-money tax; and I assure gentlemen, that it is the determination of Government, in this session, to adopt such measures as will tend to promote the happiness and prosperity of the kingdom in general.

I had almost omitted a material point in my propositions, which is, that the executive government might be enabled to grant to Roman Catholics commissions of the peace.

I therefore move for leave to bring in a bill for the further relief of his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion.

Sir H. LANGRISHE said—Sir, I rise to second the motion of my right honourable friend, and to offer my humble assistance in a measure, to the accomplishment of which my strenuous efforts have been directed from my earliest political years.

His Majesty's gracious recommendation to you of his Catholic subjects, the liberal sentiments towards them, which have already been so generally disclosed in parliament, and the able manner in which this question has been stated by my right honourable friend, have rendered it unnecessary for me to take up much of your time on the present occasion.

However, Sir, as I feel myself under some particularity of circumstance, having in the last session been placed perhaps in an arduous situation on this subject, I must solicit your indulgence for a short time, even at this stage of the business. I have so often, in the Catholic pursuit, contended with adverse currents and opposing storms, that it is natural to suppose, though I do not presume to share in the triumph, I may yet hope to partake the pre-

sent auspicious gale. I have ever considered the Roman Catholics as good and loyal subjects, magnanimous in their sufferings, and conscientious in their allegiance; as such I have ever respected them; as such I have ever endeavoured to serve them. I have, however, always pursued with more solicitude their interest than their acclamations, more anxious to be instrumental to their happiness, than to be distinguished in their councils, or rewarded by their acknowledgments. I have always endeavoured to serve them by that cautious moderation, which I thought most likely to be successful, rather than by a more adventuring boldness, which, though it might flatter their feelings, might disappoint their wishes; well knowing, as I do, the value of progressive acquisition; well knowing the value of every step gained of approximation, between brethren who had too long been kept asunder.

* If however some amongst them have thought the rate of my progress too tardy, and looked for advocates whose energy is more proportioned to their feelings, whose genius are more aspiring than mine; I can only say, whatever friends they chose, they never had me for their enemy, although I may not have agreed in every expedient which the impatience of the moment suggested, nor emulated the superior energy of their more powerful advocates.

In the last session of parliament, when I had the honour in co-operation with my right honourable friend, to move you for a further repeal of the laws affecting the Roman Catholics, I certainly wished with as much ardour as any gentleman who hears me, that the public sentiment, the temper of parliament, the probability of success, had allowed me to make my plan more extensive than that which was adopted; to have connected with the state, by nearer and closer ties, so great and valuable a part of the community as the Catholic body. But the impatience of pursuit, and the acrimony of contention, were my opponents; circumstances of intemperance on one side, revived old prejudices on the other, which made me consider accommodation and achievement. At the same time, when I consider (as I said before) the value of progressive acquisition, I must say the concessions of last winter were in themselves important, and their manner inestimable. The unanimity that conceded, stamped a double value on the thing conferred; and whatever (from my own attachment to the Roman Catholics, or the liberal disposition of those with whom I acted) whatever might have been the amount of my wishes, and would have been the extent of my efforts, had I found the occasion favourable; yet as the friend to the Catholics, I am decidedly of opinion, that any forbearance I might have yielded to on that occasion, was more than recompensed by the unanimity it produced; that unanimity, which was the symptom of departing prejudices, and the token of returning love; that graciousness of

concession, followed by a grateful acceptance, held out to my view those flattering prospects, which are brightening before me at this day, of still chosen communications of interests and affections between us. The object was a conquest of affection, not competition of power; and the means of success, mutual deference and conciliation.

I was then satisfied, and I think so still, that whatever appears from the temper of the times impracticable to be obtained, it is imprudent to solicit; for we know too well, that religious dissensions are not to be conquered by controversy and re-crimination, but must yield to the returning tide of human benevolence; toleration is a plant not to be forwarded by art, or forced by the heat of contention; the excesses of heat and of cold are alike fatal to it. It must be the growth of temperate assiduity, cultivated by the hand of moderation, and matured by the warmth of the heart. And even when toleration itself has been reared, a communication of political power, which is and ought to be amongst its natural productions, cannot in the course of things be instantaneous; like the fruit of the tree, it must be the growth of maturity, and the gift of time.

It has always been the passion and the principle of my mind, to lend my humble assistance to every measure, which in its operation might tend to make the Protestant and Catholic, by the progress of time, grow to be one people; that let them regulate their religious worship under whatever different modes, they may unite in devotion to one country; like two stems rising from one root, though they may differ in the forms in which they shape their course towards heaven, yet as they derive from one common origin, and draw their sustenance from the same land, that in their growth they may become a shelter and protection to each other. I have long wished that the time was come, which would form a new æra of Irish concord, of Irish consequence and Irish prosperity, in which religious dissension should be lost in civil operation, in which community of interests, and reciprocal good offices, should root out our prejudices, and unite our hearts. But until the enlightened spirit of liberal policy had given a progress to these rational dispositions, a communication of political power could not be expected; for you must reconcile, before you unite; you must assimilate, before you incorporate.

Beside, Sir, every body knows, who knows any thing of the history of the world, that violent and sudden changes of power and property, whether the parties have been divided by religious dissension, or by confederacies on political difference, have always been dangerous, and generally fatal to the state. The fact is, those who have been accustomed to power, cannot bear the privation or sudden diminution of it with patience. Those who are unaccustomed to it, will not exercise it with prudence; it is the progress of time alone that can reconcile and assimilate; it is the

progress of affection alone that can regulate those passions, which make one side intemperate, and the other side intolerant.

And now, Sir, I must beg leave to make an observation, suggested to me (I forget where) by a right honourable friend of mine, in which I agree with him in his sentiments of disapprobation as to the fact, but disagree with him in his suspicions of its origination.

When I recal to your recollection so disagreeable a circumstance, I do it rather as an admonition for the future, than animadversion on the past. It is true, Sir, that at the time when every thinking man saw the necessity of an union of interests and affections between his Majesty's loyal subjects of all persuasions, the most mischievous industry was employed to raise an emulation of ill-will, and sow the seeds of perpetual discord between the Protestants and Catholics. It was indeed the work but of a few, but the undisclaimed sentiments of the few are apt to be considered as the sentiments of the many, and therefore they are injurious.

Whilst I am ready to disclaim the exaggerated and acrimonious charges with which our newspapers have recrminated on the Catholics, although I cannot but disapprove, as presumptuous, that spirit that would arrogate from futurity, limit the faculties of legislation, bind down posterity, and give to exclusion immortality. Though I reject such notions as unjust, and indeed laugh at them as impotent, because, though like the father of Hannibal, you were to carry your sons to the altar, and make them swear never to be at peace with the Romans, yet neither your votes nor their vows could controul future ages. Though I utterly disclaim such notions as unjust and impolitic, I must, however, with equal justice say on the other hand, on the part of the Roman Catholics, there were circumstances attending the agitation of this question highly exceptionable. In my opinion, it was absurd in a business of this kind for the Roman Catholics to state cases to eminent lawyers, to decide whether their proceedings were or were not defensible within the letter of the law: It had too much the appearance of a guarded hostility; it looked more like the precaution of enmity, than the intercession of amicable intercourse, or constitutional solicitation.

It is not enough that their applications do not violate the laws, they also should not violate the feelings; it is not enough that they are cautious, they should be respectful. No body of men should for a moment suffer themselves, in their pursuits, to be unmindful that there is a settled supreme power in the state; to which, so long as the constitution exists, every man owes respect; that it may be solicited, but must be obeyed; that it may be softened, but must not be subdued.

When the Roman Catholics say, they wish to share in the rights and privileges of the constitution of their country, they speak the language of reason and common sense. The idea is sq

natural to the mind of man, that it was unnecessary to convene a great representative body of the Catholics, in order to decide, whether it was or was not their general wish, to enjoy the elective franchise and right of juries. Why, to be sure it was their general wish! No Catholic ever asserted or insinuated the contrary; nor if he did, would any Protestant have been dupe enough to believe him. The notion is so congenial to the mind of man, that it is impossible to controvert or condemn it; nay, there is a virtue in the wish, that is a title to its success; however, in the prosecution of it, the best friends of the Catholics could not but lament, that some measures were pursued inflammatory and offensive, tending to revive adverse prejudices, and retard the accomplishment of their own wishes; and I cannot avoid saying, (and I speak from the fatal example of a neighbouring kingdom) that your constitution will speedily be extinct, and your liberties prostrate in the dust, if you suffer conventions, associations, committees or clubs, to assert dominion or assume authority in the administration of the public affairs.

I have mentioned those circumstances of apparent animosity on both sides, in order to shew that they were the temporary result of mutual indiscretion, incidental to every such pursuit as the present; and I have mentioned them, because I think the best foundation of mutual reconciliation is a review of mutual errors; that being over, let them be forgotten; let them be buried in oblivion, never to rise again. And as to the charge made by a right honourable friend of mine against Administration for being accessary to this work of animosity, I can assure him, I think I can convince him he was misinformed. I know the present Administration always entertained the most liberal sentiments towards the Catholics, and wished to go as far in their service as the temper of parliament would permit, and they ought not to go farther; and last session of parliament, in the case of the Catholic petition alluded to, if we yielded to a prevailing current, which ran too strong to be resisted, it was to make good our passage, and secure the freight with which we were charged. And let me ask my honourable friend if he does not, from his own observation think, that Administration may have to encounter something like resentment for their present favourable disposition towards the Roman Catholics?

The right honourable member cannot doubt my sincere attachment to the present Government, yet I will assure him, at the very time when he supposes they and their friends were busy in promoting these controversies, that I myself (certainly not the least sincere amongst them in my attachment) was employed in publishing to the world the best arguments my poor abilities could furnish to reprobate and repress them. To my Protestant countrymen, I said in substance what I say now, that religious animosities should expire with the causes that produced them; that the

exclusion of the majority of the people from the privileges of the constitution has lasted long enough; that it could not last much longer, and that it ought not to last any longer.

That national strength can only be maintained by national unanimity, and that communication of benefits is the only bond of general co-operation. To my Catholic brethren I said, what I now say, and always said, that if they like the constitution as it is, I wish they may share in it; if they desire to alter it, I wish they may not approach it; that if they loved the constitution with a pure passion, their solicitation would be respectful, and they would not, like the brutal ravisher, attempt to defile what they wished to enjoy.

I shall only add, concerning the Roman Catholics, what I have already repeated to you, that you remember when they came forward to resist the invasion of a foreign enemy; that you now see them come forward to repel the invasion, not perhaps of foreign force, but of foreign principles, more destructive than armies, more cruel than the sword. The old dangers of popery, which used to alarm you, are now extinct to all intents and purposes; and new dangers have arisen in the world, against which the Catholics are your best and natural allies.

You cannot give them a single benefit that will not be an additional pledge of their affection, and hostage for their fidelity. Give them the pride of privilege, and you will give them the principle of attachment; admit them within the walls of the constitution, and they will defend them.

Doct^r DUIGENAN said; Mr. Speaker, as the right honourable gentleman, who has presented this petition, and brought forward this motion, has at the same time stated to this House, the heads of his intended bill; and as I have the misfortune to differ in opinion with the right honourable gentleman on every one of these heads, though I have had the honour heretofore of generally concurring in opinion with him on political subjects, I think it a duty I owe to my king and country fully to explain my sentiments on the business now before the House, as it is pretty generally known that his Majesty's servants in this kingdom have taken up this business in consequence of an impression made on his Majesty and his ministers in England, that the Roman Catholics of this kingdom labour under many severe oppressions from the effects of several of the present existing laws; and such impression has been made by means of a petition to his Majesty at St. James's, on the 2d day of January last; which petition has been lately printed, and circulated through this kingdom with great industry. I shall first examine the contents of that petition as the groundwork, on which is to be erected the vast structure of Roman Catholic grandeur and power; the plan of which is delineated in

the heads of the proposed bill, as explained to the House by the right honourable gentleman.

When the petition, presented lately to his Majesty, by and on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, first made its appearance in the public prints, it was insisted upon, as well in the House of Lords as in the House of Commons, that the copy of this petition, inserted in the newspapers, contained a great number of gross misrepresentations, and direct and notorious falsehoods; the sub-committee of the Roman Catholics being a kind of permanent body selected out of their general convention, have thought fit, by way of answer to the observations on their petition made in parliament, to publish their petition in a pamphlet, with notes, and the following advertisement prefixed to it:

“ S U B - C O M M I T T E E,

“ January 12th, 1793,

“ Denis Thomas O'Brien in the Chair.

“ It having been publicly and solemnly asserted, that the petition of the Catholics to his Majesty, contained many falsehoods and misrepresentations;

“ Resolved therefore, that it is necessary to republish that petition, with notes, reciting the different acts of parliament, on which the alledged falsehoods and misrepresentations are grounded.

“ Signed by order,

“ JOHN SWEETMAN, Secretary.”

I should not condescend to take notice of this sub-committee, or their pamphlet, were it not that they furnish me with an authentic copy of this famous, or rather infamous, petition; every page and almost every line of which teems with misrepresentation or falsehood: and as the Catholics have by this system of untruth, deception, and fraud, imposed so far on his Majesty's ministers in England, as to procure a paragraph to be inserted in the speech from the throne, recommending in the King's name to our serious consideration the situation of his Majesty's Catholic subjects, and that we shall consider the same with liberality; that is, that we shall consider with attention and favour the situation of the Catholics of this country, as most falsely described in their petition; and as no man in his Majesty's dominions is more firmly attached to his Majesty's person and government than I am, nor has on every occasion, where I have had an opportunity of exerting myself, more clearly manifested that attachment, I have bestowed on this petition; that is, this alledged situation of the Catholics of this country, my most serious attention, according to the recommendation in the speech; and I shall, as briefly as I can,

state to this House my opinion of this petition, and mark the principal misrepresentations and falsehoods contained in it; in hopes that my voice, however weak, may reach the throne, and rouse the just indignation of our sovereign against a set of persons who have, by fraud and imposition, audaciously attempted to procure his countenance, to the unhinging and disjoining the whole frame of his Irish Government; and uprooting foundations which have been laid by wise antiquity, and supported and maintained by the sage policy of two centuries; and which have been strong enough to resist and repel the shocks of three general and most formidable rebellions of the Catholic inhabitants of this kingdom, since the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of most glorious memory indeed.

This petition commences with deception. The petitioners, on the title of it, denominate themselves Catholics, whereas they are Roman Catholics, that is, they are persons who acknowledge the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, a foreign prince, in spirituals, as all the Irish who stile themselves Catholics, do; and will not allow his Majesty to be the supreme head of the church within this kingdom; nor will they take the oath of supremacy: and I shall demonstrate, before I sit down, that a very great portion of temporal power is incident to, and cannot, by any device, be separated from, the spiritual supremacy, avowed by the Catholics of this kingdom to be vested in the bishop of Rome: at present, I only just mark the fallacy contained in the very title of this petition, and which is invariably pursued, in this point, through the whole; in which the petitioners constantly stile themselves Catholics without the addition of Roman. It is thus "old tales represent the devil when he appears to mortals, cautiously concealing the cloven foot."

The petition then states, that the Catholics of Ireland (as they stile themselves) have for a century last past behaved with uninterrupted loyalty; in which time five foreign wars, and two domestic rebellions, have occurred; and that they have taken every oath of allegiance and fidelity to his Majesty, and have given, and been ready to give, every pledge which can be devised, for their peaceable demeanor, and unconditional submission to the laws.

This short paragraph contains two notorious falsehoods: First, they have not, for a century past, behaved with uninterrupted loyalty to the king or state, but have exerted themselves in all the five foreign wars, and two domestic rebellions, which have occurred within these hundred years last past, against their king and country, to the utmost of their power and ability, and have disturbed this country, and are now disturbing it, with many tumultuous risings in many parts of the country, in which they have practised the most inhuman barbarities on the persons of the clergy and gentry, and committed various murders, burglaries and robberies on them, within that space of time.

After the surrender of Limerick, in October 1691, the Irish Catholics (who had for two years before persisted in a most obstinate rebellion, which had almost reduced the country to a desert, and in which they had committed all sorts of barbarities on the Protestants of this country) to the amount of twenty thousand men, preferred going to France, and serving in the armies of that power, the natural enemy of Britain, against their own country. In the military articles of capitulation of the city of Limerick, they had procured an article to be inserted, stipulating for their transportation to France. The British generals, after the surrender of the town, exerted themselves to persuade the Catholic army to relinquish their intention of going to France, and to stay at home, and follow their different occupations, in their own country; or if they preferred the trade of war, General Ginkle offered to enlist them in the Dutch service: these offers they almost to a man rejected; and this Catholic army, constantly recruited and officered by the Catholics of this kingdom, have remained ever since in the French service, and have uniformly fought, with the greatest inveteracy, against this country, in the five wars with France, which have been waged during the last hundred years, at the battles of Fontenoy and Laffelt, in the war with France which ended in 1746. A body of sixteen thousand Irish Catholics fought in the army of France against Great Britain in the American war; a large body of Irish Catholics, in the service of France, fought, as well on the continent of America, as in the West-India islands, against Great Britain; and their exploits against their country, at Savannah, at St. Lucia, at St. Kitts, and St. Eustatia, may be found in the journals of the times, and in the accounts of that war. Stapleton, an Irish Catholic from the county of Limerick, commanded a body of 500 Irish Catholics in the pay of France, at the battle of Culoden in 1746, and he died at Inverness of the wounds he received in that battle, fighting for the pretender. All the French privateers which infested this channel during the late war, who plundered the British and Irish merchant ships, even in the bay of Dublin, were manned and commanded by Irish Catholics—such as John Kelly, John Field, Luke Ryan, Patrick Dowling and others; and they were furnished with intelligence, with provisions, and even with powder, by Irish Catholics from several ports in the channel, in which the wives and families of many of them were then resident. A large body of Irish Catholics have also served in the Spanish armies, and fought against their country in all the wars we have had with Spain during the last hundred years. Add to this, the insurrections of the white-boys, all Catholics, in the South of this kingdom, breaking out at intervals for upwards of twenty years past, and marked by slaughter, desolation, cruelty, and the most bitter animosity against Protestant clergy as well as laity; and the present insurrections of the lower

order of Catholics in the counties of Lowth, Meath, Cavan, and Monaghan, and now spreading into the county of Dublin: whose fury is exercised in robbing, spoiling, and burning the houses, and the contents of the farm yards of the Protestant inhabitants of these counties, and assassinating some of them; and this banditti is particularly active in disarming the Protestants, and arming themselves, with what view it is not hard to guess. With what unparalleled effrontery then do these petitioners assert, that the Catholics of Ireland have, for a century last past, behaved with uninterrupted loyalty, when the direct contrary position is the truth! Can that body of people be said to behave with loyalty to the state, who supply and recruit the armies of the enemies, whose sons, brothers, and nearest relations, appear in hostile array against the state, as well in wars with foreign nations as in domestic rebellions; who, for a century last past, have furnished formidable bodies of troops to the natural enemies of the British empire; who perpetually assault and harrafs us with domestic insurrection, robbery and murder; who are only restrained by their inability, and dread of British vengeance, from tearing the bowels of their country; and, by avowed and open rebellion, manifesting their immortal hatred to the British name and nation; and whose domestic impotence is the only security to the state for domestic peace! If such be loyal subjects, then is the wretch, who from private animosity or interest has planned your destruction, whose weakness or cowardice prevents him from executing his plan himself, but who sends his confidential bravoës to effect it—an honest and honourable man, and your attached and faithful friend! Futile are the excuses for this their conduct, urged by the Catholics, that they are precluded from serving in the British forces, by the laws, and that they therefore resort to the French and Spanish standards to procure a livelihood. Such assertion is untrue, with respect to Catholics of inferior degree, as they themselves state in their petition, that the lowest departments in the British fleets and armies are largely supplied by their numbers, so that persons of this description may get employment at home. But supposing it true, that Catholics are excluded from the British fleets and armies, can they find no other states in Europe to enlist with than the French and Spanish? and can they find no other way of procuring a livelihood in a commercial country, than by turning traitors to their king and country? It would not be a sufficient plea for a highwayman, on his trial for his crimes, to say, that his poverty induced him to commit them.

The second falsehood contained in the paragraph of this petition I have mentioned, is, that the Catholics have taken every oath of allegiance and fidelity to his Majesty; and have given, and been ready to give, every pledge which can be devised for their peaceable demeanour and unconditional submission to the laws.

The Catholics of Ireland have never yet taken the following part of the oath of supremacy: "And I declare that no foreign prince, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm." That part of the oath of allegiance prescribed to be taken by Catholics, and which it appears, that very few of them (their vaunted numbers considered) have yet taken, which relates to the Pope and foreign princes, is as follows: "And I do declare that I do not believe that the Pope of Rome, or any other foreign prince, prelate, state or potentate, hath or ought to have any temporal or civil jurisdiction, power, superiority, or pre-eminence, directly or indirectly, within this realm." By the Irish statutes of the 28th of Henry the Eighth, chapter the 5th, and of the 2d of Elizabeth, chapter the 1st, laws now existing and unrepealed, the kings and queens of this realm and their successors are declared to be supreme heads of the church of Ireland; and by these two acts, as well as by another statute of the 28th Henry the Eighth, chapter 13, the authority and jurisdiction, both temporal and spiritual, before that time claimed and exercised by the Pope in Ireland, are utterly abolished. And by the last statute it is enacted, that if any person shall, by writing or act, maintain the authority of the bishops of Rome, heretofore used in this kingdom, he shall incur the penalty of premunire.

It is very notorious, that all the Catholics of Ireland acknowledge the authority, pre-eminence and jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome in spirituals, within this kingdom: they have always refused, and still refuse, to take the oath of supremacy, acknowledging the King to be the supreme head of the church of Ireland; they not only refuse to acknowledge his Majesty, as the supreme governor, spiritual and temporal, within his dominions, but declare that another prince has the spiritual pre-eminence, jurisdiction, and authority, within and throughout the British empire; thus, as far as in them lies, robbing his Majesty of one of the brightest and most valuable gems in his imperial crown; and without enjoying which, the history of past ages shews us, that he is but half a king within his own dominions. That it is impossible to wrest an immense degree of temporal power and dominion from the person who is acknowledged to possess the supreme spiritual power, the experience of all antiquity shews. In truth, the bishop of Rome, (except in two or three instances, when he claimed to be lord paramount of certain kingdoms which he alledged to be holden as temporal fees from the temporal patrimony of St. Peter, such as Naples, and England, in the time of King John) never claimed any temporal authority in any kingdom in Christendom, save as it was inseparably annexed to, and connected with, the exercise of his spiritual power, that the claim of the Pope to spiritual authority within the

realm, supported unequivocally by all the Catholics of Ireland, invests him, *ipso facto*, with a vast portion of temporal power, can be proved to demonstration by numberless instances. I shall just mention one, on the lawfulness of matrimony, depends almost entirely the succession to all temporal property, whether real or personal. Matrimony by the Catholics is held a sacrament, its validity is entirely of spiritual jurisdiction; if the Pope then, as Catholics hold, has the supreme and final jurisdiction in this particular, see what temporal power he must derive from it; he must in all cases decide, whether a person claiming under his father or his mother, is intitled to the succession to their real or personal property, because such decision will depend on the validity of their marriage; he must decide, whether a party has or has not a right to intermarry with another, or whether a party is barred from that right by consanguinity, affinity, pre-contract or former marriage; he must finally decide on maintenance, alimony, or whether a man is, or is not, to pay the debts of a woman who claims to be his wife; with a thousand other temporal incidents. Observe what opinion the parliament of this country, just escaping from the fangs of the Pope's usurped authority, entertained of the temporal effects of the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope, exercised in the case of matrimony alone.

In an Irish statute enacted in the thirty-third year of Henry the Eighth, entitled, "an act for marriages," are the following passages: "Whereas heretofore the usurped power of the bishop of Rome, hath always entangled and troubled the mere jurisdiction and regal power of this land of Ireland, and also inquieted much the subjects of the same by his usurped power in them, as by making that unlawful, which by God's word is lawful, both in marriages and other things, whereof some sparkles be left, which hereafter might kindle a great fire." The statute then proceeds, "that it was customary for the court of Rome to divorce parties who had been long married and had issue, on the pretence of pre-contracts without consummation, and of kindred between cousins-german, and so to fourth and fifth degrees, and of carnal knowledge of any of the same kinne or affinity before, in such outward degrees, to procure money for dispensations: whereby not only much discord between lawful married persons hath arisen, much debate and suit at law, with wrongful vexation: and great damage of the innocent parties hath been procured, and many just marriages in doubt and danger of undoing, and also many times undone, and lawful heirs disinherited, and marriages have been brought to such an uncertainty thereby, that no marriage could be so sure knit and bounden, but it should lie in either of the party's power to defeat the same."

The Catholics of this country, under this pretended spiritual power of the pope, in defiance of the statutes of Elizabeth, and William the Third, against all Catholics who should attempt to

exercise any ecclesiastical jurisdiction within this realm, have endeavoured, in the point of marriage, to establish and exercise here, all this reprobated jurisdiction of the pope. It is a very short time since I was consulted as an advocate, by a very humane and worthy baronet, representative in this parliament of a large and populous county, for my advice, in what method he should proceed to procure a remedy for an injured female, on the following case: Two tenants of the baronet agreed to intermarry, they lived in the next parish to that in which the baronet resided, and being both Catholics, they were married at the baronet's request in his parish, and by the priest of his parish, and not by the priest of the parish in which they resided; after they had cohabited some time together, they were cited by the Catholic vicar-general of the diocese of Tuam, to appear before him, and he declared their marriage to be null and void, on the single ground of their having been married by the parish priest of the neighbouring parish, and not by the priest of their own parish; the vicar-general alledging, that all marriages, celebrated by any other person than the priest of the parish, in which the parties lived, without a special dispensation for the purpose, was a clandestine marriage, and that all clandestine marriages were decreed void by the council of Trent.

Will any reasonable man assert, that the exercise of such a spiritual power will not directly affect and invade the temporal rights of the subject, in his dearest and nearest interest? I omit further instances of the inseparability of spiritual power from temporal, though a thousand could be given; and I refer any man, who has a mind further to investigate this subject, and to convince himself, that the person armed with the whole spiritual power in any state, will necessarily have a vast temporal power annexed to it, and inseparable from it, to Dr. Warburton's treatise, *The Alliance*.

From what I have said, I think, I have made it pretty clear, that as long as the Catholics refuse to take the oath of supremacy, and persist in such refusal; and whilst they deny and impugn that supremacy, and maintain the supremacy in spirituals of a foreign potentate, it is an impudent untruth to assert, that they have taken every oath of allegiance and fidelity to the king; every pledge which can be devised for their peaceable demeanour, and unconditional submission to the laws. And I submit it to this House, that I have clearly shewn, that the two foundations on which they build their whole merits in this petition, are falacious, unsubstantial, and rotten; and that consequently, the whole superstructure must fall to the ground.

The next three paragraphs in this petition state, that Catholics are excluded from every office of trust or emolument, civil or military, from all officers in corporations; and that the law forbids them to found or endow any university, college, or school for

the education of their children. It is to be observed, that the condition of the Catholics in this kingdom, is the very same with the condition of all dissenters from the established church in England, in all the above particulars, except that the English Protestant Dissenters may found schools; and that it is highly unreasonable in the Irish Catholics to expect, that the existing laws here should be changed in those particulars, till the English nation shall think fit to repeal the test and corporation acts, and admit Catholics to all employments of trust and profit, civil and military; into all their corporate bodies; and permit them to found and endow universities, colleges and schools, for the home manufacture of Romish priests; a measure which I will venture to affirm, no English minister will presume to attempt. But it is here to be observed, that if the Irish law, which excludes Catholics from all military employments, was to be repealed, they could reap no advantage from it; for the fleet is entirely British, and the employments in it are disposed of to such persons only as are qualified to take them by the English laws, which exclude Catholics. The same may be said, of all employments in the army, for they are disposed of by the king, and the whole army is British; though part of it, whilst employed in this country, is paid by this country, and is, therefore, said to be on the Irish establishment. If the King should confer military commissions, in such part of his army as is on the Irish establishment, on Catholics, he would act in direct violation of the English laws; which we may rest assured his present Majesty never will. And if the acts which exclude Catholics from military employments were repealed in Ireland, and Catholics appointed to such employments, the moment any regiment on the Irish establishment should be ordered out of the kingdom, all commissions of Catholics serving therein, would be null and void. This exclusion of Catholics from all places of trust or emolument, civil or military, is thus with peculiar modesty described in the petition: "A proscription which disregards capacity or merit, admits of neither qualification or degree, and rests as an universal stigma of distrust upon the whole body of Catholics." Is not this most decent language for petitioners? They insert in their petition, the bitterest invective against the general policy of the British constitution; and to mislead the ignorant of their persuasion, they represent themselves as being solely affected by the exclusion, though it extends, in general, to all dissenters from the established church: and I am bold to say, as no class of dissenters amongst his Majesty's subjects, except the Roman Catholics, deny the King's supremacy, in spirituals, so far as to vest it in a foreign potentate; that they, more particularly than any other class of dissenters, should be the objects of distrust to the Government, and excluded from all places of trust or profit, civil or military, as they acknowledge two sovereigns, and divide their

allegiance between two masters, by a sort of ideal boundary, in its own nature incapable of being defined.

The next observation, in their petition, is a rank misrepresentation, to wit. "That their exclusion from corporations gives an advantage over Catholics, to the members of them, who thereby establish through the kingdom a species of qualified monopoly, uniformly operating in the disfavour of Catholics, contrary to the spirit and highly detrimental to the freedom of trade." By this misrepresentation, the Catholics endeavour to induce his Majesty to believe, that it is unjust, impolitic, and detrimental to trade, to permit any corporation to continue within this kingdom, and that they should be, therefore, all dissolved and abolished, or that they should be opened, (that is, considering their numbers) surrendered into the hands of the Catholics. These two schemes, respecting corporations, are the favourite plans of the present set of reformers of the constitution; a kind of levelling, independent, republican, deistical faction; whose apostles are, Paine, Price, and Priestley. The members of corporations being all Protestants, and returning Protestant members to Parliament, certainly form a strong barrier against the projected invasion of the Catholics; and corporations thus modelled, are the bulwarks of the Protestant constitution of this country: forty boroughs were created in the reign of James the First, when the crown had a right by its patents to create boroughs, for the express purpose of throwing the balance into the scale of the Protestants in Parliament; which measure was most violently opposed by the Catholics of that age; and we ought to guard our boroughs, with a vigilance and activity, proportioned to the violence of the exertions of the united factions of levellers and Catholics, either to destroy, or engross them. But it is utterly untrue, that the members of any corporation in this kingdom derive any advantage in trade over others who are not members of it; this falsehood was stuffed into the petition, to aggravate the bead-roll of pretended grievances of Catholics. What advantages in trade have the members of the corporations of Dublin, Waterford, and Cork, over the Catholic inhabitants of those cities? When Paine, Priestley, and Price, first published their seditious trash, reflecting on the constitution established, on the score of unequal representation of the people in the House of Commons, and instanced Manchester and Birmingham as having no representatives in Parliament, whilst towns of little or no note returned representatives; the wealthy traders, both of Manchester and Birmingham, reprobated the idea of their being converted into corporate towns; justly dreading evil consequences to their industry and trade, from riots, drunkenness, and dissipation, attending the canvassing for votes, and the elections of representatives in Parliament. These great and opulent towns find no advantages

in trade from their not being corporate towns, and from their not enjoying the expensive franchises of corporate bodies, nor have the Catholics of Ireland any cause whatever to complain on a similar account.

Another grievance the Catholics complain of in their petition, that they are interdicted from obtaining degrees in the university of Dublin (if they are serious in considering it a grievance, which I much doubt) is what I hope I shall never see redressed; Catholics have a right, as the law now stands, to set up and establish schools in every part of the kingdom, for the education of their youth; let that content them, and let them not expect to obtrude themselves into a participation of the emoluments of an university, founded, and partly endowed by Elizabeth, the great patroness of the reformed religion, and whose endowments have been augmented by our successive monarchs, for the sole purpose of planting in this kingdom a learned Protestant colony, for the education of a pious ministry, and the supply of missionaries to reclaim the bigotted and ignorant natives from the errors of Popery. God forbid, that I should ever see the pious intentions of the royal founders frustrated, by the conversion of this seminary, and its revenues, to the support and encouragement of Popery, or its hallowed walls made the residence of superstition and treason: if, however, it shall be determined by our rulers that our university shall be opened to the Catholics, let the British ministry lead the way, and first procure an act of Parliament in England, for opening the English universities of Oxford and Cambridge to Catholics, from attaining any degree, in which Catholics are barred by English acts of Parliament, and then, perhaps, the bitter potion of conferring academical degrees, in the university of Dublin, on Catholics, may be more readily swallowed by the infatuated, betrayed, and deserted Protestants of this country. It is here necessary to remark, that Catholics are not interdicted from obtaining degrees in the university of Dublin, by the charter and statutes of that university only; but by the Irish act of the 2d of Eliz. chap. 1. sec. 10. which, though enacted before the foundation of the university of Dublin, yet, by special words, extends to all universities, which should, after the date of that act, be founded or established in this kingdom.

The next paragraph of the petition relates to the laws, which restrain papists from carrying arms; laws certainly very necessary when they were enacted, and, from recent experience, very proper to be now rigorously enforced. Exclusive of the direct falsity of part of this passage, no paragraph ever teemed with grosser misrepresentation and fraud; if suppression of the necessity of enacting them, of all circumstances of mitigation and exception in the laws themselves, and of their duration, execution, and effects, are to be considered as misrepresentation and fraud.

First, the petition states, that Catholics are totally prohibited from keeping, or using weapons for the defence of their houses, families, and persons, whereby they are exposed to the violence of burglary, robbery, or assassination: this is at once a suppression of truth, and a suggestion of falsehood; they suppress the truth, that all the statutes enacted to prevent Catholics from keeping arms in this kingdom, give a power to the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council to licence any Catholic they may think fit, to keep and carry arms; and that no Catholic nobleman, gentleman, or even farmers of respectable characters, have ever been refused such licences, when they have properly applied for them; and that such licence is to be granted without any gratuity, fee, or reward, save one shilling for the writing thereof; and they suggest a falsehood in stating, that they are totally prohibited from keeping or using weapons. Next, in mentioning the statute enacted for the suppression of a dangerous Catholic banditti, called white-boys, in the 15th and 16th years of his present Majesty's reign, who ravaged several parts of this kingdom, by intervals, for several years; exercising the most unheard-of cruelties on the peaceable and unoffending Protestant inhabitants: they state, that every Catholic of whatever degree, peer or peasant, is compellable by any magistrate to come forward, and convict himself, of keeping arms for his defence; or, if he refuses so to convict himself, he may not only incur fine and imprisonment, but the vile and ignominious punishment of pillory and whipping. In this paragraph also, the suppression of truth, and suggestion of falsehood, are very notorious and remarkable: first, all Catholics are not subject to the provisions of this act, but such only as are not duly licenced by the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, to keep or carry arms: secondly, the act provides, "That no person shall be convicted, or incur any penalty, for any offence, upon any confession or discovery he or she shall make, on being examined, on oath, before a magistrate, nor shall any such examination be given in evidence against the person so examined, unless such person shall be indicted for having committed wilful perjury on such examination." From hence it appears to be utterly untrue, that any Catholic is compellable by any magistrate, to come forward, and by his own confession convict himself of any offence, or that he can incur any penalty for an offence disclosed by such confession. Thirdly, as the petition is worded, it is insinuated, that a person refusing to appear before a magistrate, and to be examined as directed by the act, may incur the punishment of fine and imprisonment, and, also, that of pillory and whipping; and on this part of the act the petition makes a most pathetic, and at the same time an inflammatory remark, for the purpose of exciting the resentment of their sect; but no Catholic, as the act is worded, can be punished at all, for refusing to appear be-

fore a magistrate, and be examined according to the act, provided he has obtained a licence for keeping and carrying arms, nor can he be punished in any manner, unless he shall be indicted, tried, and convicted for such refusal, nor can the punishments of fine and imprisonment, and, also, whipping and pillory, be inflicted on the same person, for the same offence; it is left to the discretion of the judge, who tries the offender, if he shall be found guilty, to inflict the punishment either of fine or imprisonment, or that of pillory and whipping. And it is very well known, that when a statute gives such a discretion, the punishment of pillory or whipping was never inflicted on any malefactor, but on those of the lowest and meanest degree, as were indeed the generality of white-boys; for the suppression of whom this statute was enacted. The assertion, therefore, that all Catholics, peers or peasants, may, by the operation of this act, be subjected to the ignominious punishment of pillory and whipping, is a misrepresentation. The petition, also, suppresses most fraudulently, the last clause of this statute, which is in the words following:—"And whereas it is intended that this law shall be in force no longer than public necessity shall require; be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that this act shall continue in force to the 24th day of June, 1778, and no longer." This statute, it is true, has been continued from time to time, because the disorders, for the suppression of which it was enacted, have continued from time to time; nay, similar disorders are now committing in the counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Meath, and Dublin, by a banditti, all Catholics, calling themselves Defenders, with a malignant activity, which has, as yet, generally evaded or defeated the utmost exertions of the standing army to suppress them. But the Catholic petition has omitted to state, that this act will expire with the next session of Parliament, unless the outrages of their own sect shall render it necessary to continue it. It will be naturally supposed by his Majesty and his ministers in England, from the tragical complaints respecting the incapability of Irish Catholics to keep arms, contained in the petition, that the Irish statutes have, in that particular, been rigidly executed. With what astonishment then must they be struck, when informed that these laws have been seldom put in execution, and then never generally, but in small districts of the country, which have been infested by dangerous commotions, and insurrections of Catholics! Mr. Harris, in his History of King William, published in the year 1745, states, that the act of the 7th of King William, intitled, "An act for the better securing the Government by disarming Papists;" of which the act of the 13th of George the Second, for disarming Papists, is an amendment, has been rarely executed, except upon the apprehension of invasion or public disturbance; and even then, with all possible lenity

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and moderation: and to prove that the clauses in the act of the 15th and 16th of his present Majesty, respecting the disarming of Catholics, have never been carried into execution, except in times of public insurrection and disturbance, and then too, amongst the meanest of the people; and that no person has ever yet suffered the punishment of pillory and whipping under that act, I can safely appeal to the testimony of all the inhabitants of this kingdom, whether Catholics or Protestants. That Catholics, in any degree superior to the very lowest of the mob, never had any apprehension, that the provisions in this act were intended to affect them, or ever would be executed against them, appeared most manifestly during the season of volunteering in this country, which commenced subsequent to the passing of that act; the Catholics, not only mixed with Protestants in most of the volunteer corps throughout the kingdom, were regimented, carried arms publicly, and learned military tactics; but they formed themselves into large and numerous corps, well armed, accoutred, and instructed in military exercise, and marched and appeared in military array on all occasions, as other volunteers. I saw, myself, a corps of Dublin volunteers, called the Irish Brigade, nineteen in twenty of which were Catholics, march through the city of Dublin, and close to the gates of the castle, the residence of his Majesty's Lieutenant, along with other volunteers, to be reviewed in his Majesty's Phoenix-park. I had the curiosity to count the volunteers on that day, as it was a review of all the volunteers in the province of Leinster; I stood on Essex-bridge, and counted them accurately, and as well as I now recollect, they amounted to about two thousand men, and no more; of which about one-third were serviceable men, if called to action; of this whole number, the Irish Brigades amounted to six hundred, and all the other volunteers of the city of Dublin amounted to about four hundred only; so that the Catholics of Dublin then in arms, without a man of them having a license to carry arms, or having ever applied for one, exceeded all the Protestant corps of the city of Dublin, by about two hundred, and this in the view, and, as it were, under the nose of Government. Does not this prove to a demonstration, that the better sort of Catholics never imagined that the statute of the 15th and 16th of his present Majesty tended to, or ever would be put in execution against them?

The next paragraph of the petition is one continued misrepresentation. It states, that the personal property of all Catholics is insecure, that the law allows and encourages the disobedient child to conform, and deprive the Catholic parent of it; and that the father does not, by the surrender of his all, purchase his repose, he may be attacked by new bills, if his future industry be successful, and again be plundered by due process of law. This misrepresentation arises, either from a mis-

construction of the acts of the 2d of Ann. chap. 6th, intituled, "An act to prevent the further growth of Popery;" and of the 8th of Ann. chap. the 3d. intituled, "An act to explain and amend the aforesaid, act of the second of Anne, and the act of the 17th and 18th of his present Majesty, chap. 49;" or, from the scheme of fraud and imposition, so unremittingly pursued through the whole performance; from the notes annexed to the edition of this petition, published by the Catholic sub-committee, I am convinced it did not arise from ignorance, but from premeditated design of imposition. The two aforesaid acts of the 2d and 8th of Queen Anne, the first to prevent the growth of Popery, and the other to explain and amend the first, form but one act of Parliament in effect, and are always considered, in law, as two parts of one whole: the act of the second of Anne, in section the third, gives the conforming child of a Popish parent, a right to file a bill in Chancery against the parent, stating the degree and ability of the parent, and his or her conformity, and praying, that the Chancellor may decree a maintenance and portion to such child out of the parent's effects, suitable to the degree and ability of such parent: the portion which the act enabled the Chancellor to decree on such bill, not to be payable till the death of such parent. Under the word *ability*, this act subjected both the real and personal estate of the Catholic parent to the maintenance and portion of the conforming child. This act of the 2d of Anne, the Catholic parents of that age, very easily eluded by fictitious conveyances, judgments, and incumbrances: and there was also some difficulty in determining, what the child should perform, in respect to conformity, in order to intitle him to relief under this act: to remedy these defects the statute of the 8th of Anne was enacted, giving the conforming child no new remedy against the Catholic parent, but it regulates and settles what the conforming child must do, to entitle him to file a bill against his parent for a maintenance and portion; and it obliges the parent to discover on oath, the true value of his real and personal estate, over and above all *bonâ fidē* incumbrances; neither is the Chancellor enabled by the 8th of Anne to make any decree on such bill, save such decree as he was enabled to make by the act of the 2d of Anne; and he is also, particularly, restrained, during the life of the Catholic parent, from giving more to his Protestant conforming child or children, for support and maintenance, than one-third of the personal and real estate of the parent, and he was left at liberty to give as much less as he, in his discretion, might think fit. It is admitted, that real estates of Catholics are exempted from any charge for their conforming children, by the laws some time since enacted in this kingdom; but, it is suggested, that their personal estates are still liable, which suggestion is founded on the following quibble: by the act of the 17th and

18th of his present Majesty, it is enacted, " That no maintenance or portion shall be granted to any child of a Popish parent, upon a bill filed against such parent, pursuant to the act of the 2d of Queen Anne, out of the personal property of such Papist, except out of such leases which Papists may hereafter take under the powers granted in the act of the 17th and 18th of his Majesty; any thing contained in any act or statute to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding." The quibble is thus; this act exempts the personal estate of Catholics from maintenances and portions, which, heretofore, might have been decreed, on a bill filed under the act of the 2d of Anne, and not from maintenances and portions which may be yet decreed, on a bill filed under the act of the 8th of Anne, for it does not at all mention the 8th of Anne; but, I trust, I have already shewn that the bill given to a conforming child under the 2d of Anne, is the very same bill given under the 8th of Anne, that both acts are to be considered as different parts of one act only; and that, if the Chancellor is prohibited by the 17th and 18th of his present Majesty, from giving any portion or maintenance to the conforming child of a Catholic, on a bill filed by such conforming child, pursuant to the 2d of Anne; he is also, prohibited from giving any portion or maintenance to the conforming child, on a bill filed under the 8th of Anne; for both bills are one and the same bill, with respect to their scope and prayer, and the relief to be given upon them. It is impossible to form a bill for maintenance and portion under the 8th of Anne, which will not also be a bill for the same purpose, under the 2d of Anne. And the words in the recited clause of the 17th and 18th of his present Majesty, " any thing contained in any act or statute to the contrary notwithstanding," form a sweeping clause, including the 8th of Anne, and every other statute, if any there is, which could in any manner serve to countenance the quibble: Leases for long terms of years taken by Catholics, between the year 1778 and 1782, are liable yet to maintenance and portions for conforming children; but Catholics may easily prevent it, either by selling such leases, or surrendering them, and taking new ones for the remainder of the terms. No instance can be given of any bill filed in Chancery by a conforming child against a Catholic parent, for portion and maintenance, since the year 1778; which is a proof, if one was wanted, that no such bill is maintainable: and the Catholics of Ireland may rest assured, that they have full power and authority, as the laws now stand, to starve their conforming children, who depend on them for support, if any of them, hereafter, shall dare to conform to the Protestant religion.

The two next paragraphs state, the exclusion of Catholics from grand juries, unless there be a deficiency of Protest.

and from petit juries in some cases; and the consequences, deduced in the petition, of this exclusion, form a mass of exaggerated misrepresentations and falsehood. Of their exclusion from grand juries, they state the following hardships as the consequences:

First, That they are deprived of that humane and equitable principle of the law, which says, that no man shall be convicted of any capital offence, unless by the concurring verdicts of two juries of his neighbours and equals.

Secondly, That they are thereby deprived of the great palladium of the constitution, trial by their peers.

And, thirdly, That it is manifest injustice, to have their property taxed in assessments, by a body from which they are formally excluded.

As to the first suggested hardship, it is a falsehood. There is no principle of the law which says, that no man shall be convicted of any capital offence, unless by the concurring verdicts of two juries of his neighbours and equals; the verdict of one jury of twelve men, will convict or acquit any person who is tried before them for a capital crime; and neither Catholic or Protestant commoner, can be convicted of any crime, capital or otherwise, except by the verdict of twelve men, his neighbours and equals, (that is, twelve commoners, his peers,) given upon his trial. This falsehood, I suppose, they will attempt to support by a passage in Blackstone's Commentaries, mis-stated by them, and perhaps misunderstood, which is as follows: "That
 " no man can be convicted at the suit of the King, of any capital offence, unless by the unanimous voice, (not verdict) of
 " twenty-four of his equals, and neighbours; that is, by twelve,
 " at least, of the grand jury, in the first place, assenting to the
 " accusation, and afterwards, by the whole petit jury of twelve
 " more, finding him guilty on his trial." And in the preceding page, the same author states, "That the grand jury are
 " only to hear evidence on behalf of the prosecution; for finding an indictment, is only in the nature of an enquiry or accusation, which is afterwards to be tried and determined;
 " and the grand jury are only to enquire, upon their oaths, whether there be sufficient cause to call upon the party to answer
 " it." Thus it is evident, that a grand jury tries no man, and gives no verdict. Catholics have the same advantage as Protestants of that maxim of law, that no man can be convicted of any capital offence, except by the unanimous voice of twenty-four of his neighbours and peers; that is, by the assent of twelve grand jurors, all commoners, to the propriety of putting the indictment or the accusation into a way of trial, and to the determination of his guilt, by twelve petit jurors, all commoners also, and his peers, on their oaths on the trial, which is called a verdict; and no Catholic can be found guilty of any capital

offence, except by the unanimous voice of twenty-four of his neighbours and peers.

The second hardship complained of, by the exclusion of Catholics from grand juries, is also, a notorious falsehood, viz. that Catholics are deprived thereby of a trial by their peers; for a grand jury tries no man, but only puts him upon his trial, and Catholics, as well as Protestants, can be only tried by their peers; unless the ridiculous assertion shall be maintained, that Protestant and Catholic commoners are not peers to each other, in the legal sense of the word Peers; and Catholics may serve indifferently with Protestants, in all petit juries, for the trial of all offences, whether capital or otherwise, except offences under the Popery laws, such as enlisting men for foreign service, &c. in which cases, it would be the highest absurdity to suffer Catholics to serve on petit juries, to try persons for crimes, of which they themselves are daily guilty.

The third hardship deduced by the petition from the exclusion of Catholics from grand juries is, that it is manifest injustice to have their property taxed in assessments by the grand juries, from which they are formally excluded; grand juries are selected from among the principal gentlemen of the counties, at the discretion of the sheriffs; they cannot exceed twenty three in number, and are not elected; they are impowered by law to lay assessments on the landholders of the counties, for county purposes; all the landholders without distinction are subject to the payment of their several proportions of these assessments, which are generally apportioned by the number of acres they respectively occupy; the grand jurors themselves pay as well as others; and all the Protestants of a county who are not grand jurors, have as much reason to complain of these assessments as the Roman Catholics.

The hardship which the Catholics deduce from their exclusion, in some cases, from petit juries is, that they are in a worse condition, in their native country, than aliens, for aliens may demand an equitable privilege denied to Catholics, of having half their jury aliens like themselves. The exaggeration contained in this complaint is remarkable; they represent themselves in every case which can come to be tried before a jury, as in a worse condition than aliens, though they are not excluded from serving on petit juries on any civil case, except on trials of actions between Protestants and Catholics; and that too, provided they are challenged, and the challenge proved; and they well know that such challenges are very seldom made, nor are they excluded from serving on petit juries on the trial of any criminal matter whatsoever; except on the trial of offences under the Popery laws; in which cases, as I have already observed, it would be absurd to permit them to serve; the complaint also, that they are in a worse condition than aliens, because questions of property

between them and Protestants may, perhaps, be tried by Protestants only; (a regulation which their own inveterate hatred of Protestants, their universal claim to all estates in this kingdom, now enjoyed by Protestants, as estates of which their ancestors have been unjustly deprived, and their envy of the industry and prosperity of Protestants, made absolutely necessary) should open the eyes of all Protestants in this country, and point out to them the guile and fraud of the Catholic party, who are now coaxing and soothing them into a surrender of every thing that can give Protestants any security for the peaceable enjoyment of their religion, their lives, and their estates, by stiling them in their publications, their brethren; when at the same time their petition states that they look upon themselves in a worse condition than aliens, because their claims of property, and the offences they may commit, are in some few cases of absolute necessity for the sake of justice, to be tried by Protestants only; that is, by those whom they have lately affected to stile their brethren.

I come now to the last complaint in the petition, to wit, the incapacity of Catholics to vote at the elections of representatives in Parliament; this incapacity they set forth as the badge of unmerited disgrace and ignominy; and as the cause and bitter aggravation of all their other calamities. In all the prior parts of their petition they deal in bold and shameless falsehoods, in clumsy groundless aggravation, in notorious misrepresentation, suppression of truth and miserable quibbles; but on the subject of their incapacity of voting, they have exhausted all their eloquence, all their art, cunning, powers of deception, falsehood, aggravation, misrepresentation, and all piteous and pathetic declamation, which lay within the stores of the whole fraternity. They endeavour to persuade his Majesty, that the deprivation of the elective franchise has reduced them to the most miserable state, it is possible to degrade human creatures to; that exclusion from the elective franchise, subjects them to every evil and misfortune to which human nature is liable. After this lamentable exordium, they proceed to state the evils particularly, to which exclusion from the elective franchise subjects them.

First, that they are taxed where they are not represented actually or virtually; and bound by laws, in the framing of which they have no power to give or withhold their assent.

Secondly, that it happens continually, and from the malignant nature of the law, of necessity must happen, that multitudes of the Catholic tenantry in divers counties in the kingdom are, at the expiration of their leases, expelled from their tenements and farms, to make room for Protestant freeholders, to support the interest of their landlord, and that this uncertainty of possession of the Catholic tenantry, discourages industry and cultivation, and prevents the improvement of the kingdom.

Thirdly, that many Catholics, to preserve their families from total destruction, and preferring perjury to famine, submit to a nominal conformity against their conscience, and take oaths which they do not believe.

As to the first grievance suggested to arise from the exclusion of Catholics from the elective franchise, that of their being taxed where they are not represented actually or virtually; and bound by laws, in the framing of which they cannot express assent or dissent; it is proper to observe, that in all their late publications, and in this petition, they state, that the Protestants of Ireland amount to one-fourth of the inhabitants only, which altogether amount to four millions; consequently the Protestants, by their statement, amount to one million. The legislature of this country, as well as of England, has thought fit to prescribe certain qualifications, without the possession of which no person is allowed to vote for representatives in Parliament; and by our constitution the legislature has an undoubted right so to do. One of these qualifications, in Ireland, as to voters in counties is, that every voter shall have a freehold of the yearly value of forty shillings at the least; another, which extends to all voters whether in counties or boroughs is, that the voters shall be Protestants. It is computed that all persons who enjoy the elective franchise in Ireland, whether in counties or boroughs, do not exceed the number of sixty thousand; so that there are in Ireland, nine hundred and forty thousand Protestants who do not enjoy the elective franchise, admitting, for argument's sake, the calculations of the Catholics, as to the relative numbers of the inhabitants of this kingdom, to be true; and the number of Protestants excluded from the elective franchise in Ireland, are to those Protestants who enjoy it in the proportion nearly of eighteen to one; hence, eighteen out of nineteen of the Protestant inhabitants of Ireland are in the self same condition, in respect to exclusion from the elective franchise with the Catholics; and if the Catholic position is true, are not actually or virtually represented in Parliament. It must be here remarked, that both in England and Ireland, the whole commons in the realm have been hitherto supposed to be, both actually and virtually represented by the House of Commons, though the members of the House have not for ages past been elected by the whole commons of the realm, but by comparatively a small part only; that Catholics, by conforming and qualifying themselves as the laws of the state direct, may attain the elective franchise, and that all persons who possess a capability of becoming electors, though not actually electors, are supposed to be represented in Parliament. I will not here enter into any further disquisition respecting actual or virtual representation, but I will venture to affirm, that in large states, which possess extensive territory and population, it is utterly imprac-

licable to extend the elective franchise to all conditions of people, and at the same time support any regular form of government; and that the plan of election, now adopted by the French assassins, will, as long as it lasts, be attended by anarchy, public confusion, and calamity.

The second evil which the petition states, that Catholics endure by their exclusion from the elective franchise, and on the score of which they utter the most pitiful exclamations, is, "that such is the malignity of this law of exclusion, that from its very nature, it is the cause of the expulsion of the Catholic tenantry from their farms, of the uncertainty of their tenures, and of the consequent desolation of the kingdom." This is one of the most impudent falsehoods that ever was advanced in any age or country; there is scarce one gentleman in this House acquainted with the internal state of this country, who does not know it to be a falsehood; it being now the almost universal mode of letting lands in Ireland, for the landlord to advertise his lands at the expiration of a lease, to be let to the best and highest bidder, and to let them accordingly, without considering the religion of the tenant, but merely his solvency, and the price he offers; but I will demonstrate it to be a falsehood from their own state of their case, and their own reasoning. The Catholics of Ireland, as they state, amount to three-fourths of the whole inhabitants; the Protestant inhabitants can, therefore, amount only to the one-fourth; the Catholics, who apply themselves to farming and country business, exceed the Protestants of the same class in a much greater portion than their relative numbers bear, from reasons not now necessary to enumerate: so that supposing the Catholic calculation of numbers to be true, the Catholic farmers must exceed the Protestants in the proportion of at least six to one. Hence it is impossible that the assertions contained in the Catholic petition, respecting the expulsion of Catholic tenantry in favour of Protestants, can be true; because, if a Protestant landlord was ever so much inclined to expel his Catholic tenantry, and substitute Protestants in their room, it is impossible for him, from want of Protestants, to gratify such inclinations; and it is evident to demonstration, from the statement of the Catholics in the petition, that six parts in seven of the kingdom must be laid waste, and the Protestant landlords all ruined, if they should expel their Catholic tenantry, in expectation of procuring Protestant tenants. Thus I have convicted the Catholics of downright falsehood in this particular, from their own statement in their petition.

The third grievance, which the petition alleges to be a consequence of the exclusion of Catholics from the elective franchise, and for the remedy of which they appeal with the greatest energy to his Majesty's piety, clemency, and commiseration, is, that several Catholics, to prevent themselves from being expelled

from their farms, and thereby, with their families becoming the prey of famine, conform to the Protestant religion against their consciences, and perjure themselves by taking oaths they do not believe. I have already shewn that no such grievance as the expulsion of Catholics from their farms in consequence of electioneering schemes exists, or ever did exist, in this kingdom; and if the statement of the Catholics, contained in their petition, be true, it is impossible it could, or can exist, and therefore no such consequence can follow from it as this third pretended grievance. I do indeed admit, that at all county elections in this kingdom, there are to be found Catholics wicked enough to perjure themselves by swearing that they are not Catholics, to enable themselves to vote; and this is partly admitted in the writs of Edward Byrne, after mentioned; but they do this voluntarily, and are not induced by any necessity or causes, save their depravity, avarice, and perhaps ambition, to do so; and I hope the election laws in this kingdom will be never changed on account of such wicked miscreants, who are as ready to perjure themselves on any other account, if paid for it, as on elections; and who have caused the words "Irish evidence" to be echoed throughout Great Britain, as terms of proverbial disgrace to this country.

The petition, after stating a string of grievances, which I have shewn never had existence, as proceeding from the exclusion of Catholics from the elective franchise, then proceeds to claim this franchise as a right, and sounds the claim of right of the Catholics on as bold untruths as any contained in the former part of their petition, or rather bolder; for the principal falsehood on which the petitioners ground it, stands refuted by the public records, by acts of Parliament, and by history; and this falsehood also, includes a libel on the Protestant government of this country since the revolution, as groundless and malicious as ever yet was published. The petition states, "That the right of franchise, that is, of elective franchise, was secured, at least to a great part of the Catholic body, by the treaty of Limerick, in 1691, guaranteed by King William and Queen Mary, and finally confirmed and ratified by Parliament; notwithstanding which, and in direct breach of the public faith of the nation, thus solemnly pledged, for which their ancestors paid a valuable consideration, in the surrender of their arms and a great part of the kingdom, and notwithstanding the most scrupulous adherence on the part of the Catholics to the terms of the said treaty, and their unremitting loyalty from that day to the present, the said right of elective franchise was finally and universally taken away from the Catholics of Ireland, so late as the first year of his Majesty King George the Second." It will not be very difficult to expose the notorious falsehoods of every part of this paragraph. The

whole body of Irish Catholics, after the abdication of King James II. in England, took up arms, under the pretence of supporting his title to the crown of Ireland; but in reality for the purpose of overturning the Protestant ecclesiastical establishment in this kingdom, and substituting Popery in its stead; and of separating this country for ever from England; as all persons who have read the proceedings of the pretended Parliament held in Dublin, under the authority of King James in 1689, must be convinced. The Protestants of this kingdom took up arms in their own defence, and were supported by a formidable army, sent from England by King William, to their assistance; after two years of a bloody and destructive civil war, the Catholic forces, every where routed and defeated, were driven into the city of Limerick, in which, in the autumn of the year 1691, they were closely besieged by the generals of King William, and the Protestant army under their command. Pent up in this city, the Catholic army was reduced to enter into articles of capitulation with the general of King William, the Baron de Ginckle, on the third day of October, 1691, which capitulation is stiled, the Military Articles of Limerick; these military articles relate solely to the Catholic regular army and rapparees, a kind of irregular Catholic banditti, then in arms in the counties of Limerick, Cork, Clare, and Kerry, and to the garrison of the town of Sligo, which had surrendered on the 15th of September preceding. The chief conditions, stipulated by these military articles, relate to the safe transportation into France of such officers and soldiers of that army, as should choose to embark for that country. Of the whole Catholic army only three principal officers, to wit. Brigadier Clifford, (an Englishman); Colonel Henry Luttrell, and Colonel Purcell, chose to stay at home; together with some officers of inferior rank, and private soldiers; the rest, to the amount of twenty thousand men, chose to embark for France, and were transported thither accordingly. See Harris's Life of King William, pages 351 and 352.

Exclusive of this military capitulation, there was another capitulation signed by the lords justices and General Ginckle on the one part, and by the Catholic gentlemen of landed property, amongst whom were Sir Garret Dillon, Sir Theobald Butler, and John Brown, Esq. three Catholic lawyers of great eminence, on the other part. This capitulation is called, the Civil Articles of Limerick; they are twelve in number, with a kind of postscript, solely relating to Colonel John Brown, and the first of them only relates to the Roman Catholics (not Catholics) of Ireland in general, and is confined entirely to certain stipulations respecting the exercise of their religion. The last of these articles is in the words following: "Lastly, the lords justices and general do undertake, that their majesties will ratify these

" articles within the space of eight months or sooner, and use
" their utmost endeavours that the same shall be ratified and con-
" firmed in Parliament." It is proper here to observe, that as
the King has no power by our constitution, to make laws by his
own authority to bind his subjects, laws respecting internal go-
vernment and the regulation of his kingdom, must be enacted
by Parliament. The King, his deputies or generals, had no
power to contract absolutely with the Catholics of this kingdom,
his own subjects, then in actual rebellion against him, for any
civil privileges or immunities whatsoever, Parliament alone has
the power of making such contracts, and it appears by this 12th
article, that the able lawyers who conducted this capitulation on
the part of the Catholics, perfectly well understood the consti-
tution in this point; and they must have also known, that every
law made by Parliament, is again revocable and repealable by
Parliament at any time, when either the same Parliament, or a
succeeding one, may think it fit and expedient to repeal it.
The crown could not perform any part of these civil articles,
nor could it contract to perform any of them, except such part
of them as related to the release or restoration of such estates as
were liable to forfeiture, or had been seized or forfeited, on ac-
count of the rebellion, which became thereby the property of
the crown; and so far, and no farther, could the crown ratify
the civil articles of Limerick, or guarantee them in any manner.
The Catholic army, as to the rest of the civil articles, surren-
dered expressly on the condition, that the crown should use its
utmost influence to prevail on the Parliament to ratify them;
such engagement the crown fulfilled with the utmost good faith:
and if the crown, after exerting its utmost influence with Par-
liament for the purpose, was unable to prevail on the Parliament
to ratify these civil articles in their full extent, as was the case,
the capitulation of Limerick was in no wise infringed; the
crown and the rebel army in Limerick having only contracted,
that as much of these articles as could be performed by the
crown, and as much as should be afterwards ratified by Par-
liament, should be carried into execution.

There is not one of these civil articles of Limerick which se-
cures the enjoyment of the elective franchise to the Catholics of
Ireland, or to any part of them, or recognizes in any manner
their right to such franchise, as stated in the petition, or even
mentions it. The article on which some Catholic writers have
attempted to ground their assertions, respecting rights pretended
to be acquired by the articles of Limerick, is the second arti-
cle. It is in substance as follows: " That all the inhabitants
" or residents of Limerick, or any other garrison then in pos-
" session of the Irish, and all officers and soldiers then in arms
" under any commission of King James, or those authorized
" by him to grant the same, in the several counties of Limerick,

“Cork, Clare, Kerry, and Mayo, or any of them, and all such as are under their protection in said counties; and all commissioned officers in their majesty’s quarters, belonging to the Irish regiments in being, that were treated with, and were not prisoners of war, or had taken protection, who should return and submit to their majesty’s obedience, their and every of their heirs, should hold, possess, and enjoy, all and every of their estates of freehold and inheritance, and all the rights, titles, and interests, privileges, and immunities, which they, and every, or any of them, held, enjoyed, or were rightfully and lawfully intitled to, in the reign of King Charles the Second, or at any time since, by the laws and statutes that were in force in the reign of King Charles the Second, discharged of all arrears of quit and crown rent, incurred since Michaelmas 1688, to the day of the date of the articles; provided that no person whatsoever should have or enjoy the benefit of that article, who should neglect or refuse to take the oath of allegiance made by act of Parliament in England, in the first year of the reign of King William and Queen Mary, when thereunto required.

It is now necessary to see how much of these civil articles were ratified by Parliament; first observing, that all the Protestants of this kingdom were highly dissatisfied with the capitulation in general; as the Catholic troops, who had treated them with the greatest cruelty and severity for three years preceding, were thereby not only exempted from all punishment for their rebellion, but were secured in the possession and enjoyment of all their estates, without making the smallest compensation to the Protestants for all the ravages they had for three years preceding committed on their property. On inspection on the statute of the ninth of William, chapter the second, intituled, “An act for confirmation of articles made at the surrender of the city of Limerick, which act passed in the year 1697,” (for no sooner could the Irish Parliament be prevailed on to ratify any part of those articles,) it will be found that the Irish Parliament did not ratify the first civil article respecting religion, or any part of it; and as to the second article, the Parliament specially ratified it in the sense and intendment contained in the act, and not otherwise. They rejected out of their ratification of it the words, “and all such as are under their protection in the said counties,” thereby excluding all persons from the benefit of the second article, except the inhabitants of Limerick, and the officers and soldiers of the Irish army. To the words “all rights, titles, and interests, privileges and immunities,” the Parliament added the words, “to the said estates of freehold and inheritance belonging; and that the restoration of the persons comprised in the second article thus ratified, should only extend, or be construed to extend, to the restoring of the said persons and every of them, to their said estates of freehold and inhe-

ritance, against his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, in as large and ample manner as they should have enjoyed the same, had they not been guilty of the rebellion aforesaid, and not otherwise, or in any other manner;" thereby expressly declaring, that though these Catholic estates were restored to Catholics, freed from any forfeiture to the crown, yet that they were to hold them subject to such limitations, conditions, and restrictions, as the Parliament of Ireland should, from time to time, please to annex to them. The act then proceeded to ratify others of the civil articles, but some were totally omitted. Any person who has an inclination to see a full and able refutation of this calumny, that the capitulation of Limerick was infringed, may find it in a pamphlet written by a very learned member of this House, (Doctor Arthur Brown, one of the representatives of the University in Parliament,) published some years ago, and lately republished in this city. I have said enough respecting these articles for my present purpose;—now let us examine what persons could become intitled to any benefit under the second of the civil articles of Limerick; certainly the soldiers and officers of the Catholic army, and the inhabitants of Limerick, or any other garrison then in possession of the Irish (which were two only, to wit, Clare Castle and Ross Castle, very small, insignificant fortresses, in which there could be very few inhabitants except their garrisons) and this too, on the condition of their returning and submitting to their majesties obedience, and taking the oath of allegiance, if required. I have shewn already that nine-tenths of the Catholic army rejected this condition, went to France, and abandoned their country and estates, and the elective franchise never was guaranteed by this second article, to the few Catholics who stayed in their country, and performed the condition contained in the article, by the words of the article as ratified by Parliament. The words of the article are, that they should be restored to their estates of freehold and inheritance, and all the rights, titles, and interests, privileges and immunities, to the said estates belonging, as they held them in the reign of Charles the Second; and the act of ratification expressly states, that this clause in the articles is to be considered only as restoring Catholics to their estates, freed from any impeachment on score of forfeiture to the crown for their rebellion; and therefore it never can be construed so, as to bar the Parliament from cutting off from these estates any privileges annexed to them, the exercise of which, whilst the estates remained in the hands of the Catholics, would be prejudicial to the state. The words, "rights, titles, and interests, privileges and immunities," are mere words of conveyance and assurance; and frequently used in conveyances of estates, and signifying nothing more than that the grantee, has, by the conveyance, the full dominion over the estates: besides, it cannot be argued without manifest absurdity, that any

privilege annexed to these estates, very few in number, and very inconsiderable, which the handful of Catholics, who qualified themselves to take the benefit of the articles, were at the time of the date of the articles intitled to, attached to the person of the Catholic; he possessed any annexed privileges, only in virtue of his possession of the estate, and they expired with his title to the land; neither can Catholics possibly claim any privilege, annexed by the articles of Limerick, to the few estates which the few qualified Catholics then became entitled to under these articles, as annexed to estates, which Catholics have purchased since the date of the capitulation.

I trust I have said enough fully to prove that the elective franchise was not secured to any Catholics whatsoever, by the articles of capitulation of the city of Limerick, in October 1691, and never was guaranteed by King William and Queen Mary, nor ratified by Parliament; that the whole state of this business, as set forth in the Catholic petition, is a string of continued falsehood; and that a body of people, who, in defiance of all public records, can carry to the foot of the throne so notorious an untruth, and, though petitioners cannot conceal their hatred and animosity against those whom they affect to stile their Protestant brethren, but stuff their petition with false, rancorous, and malignant libels against the Protestant government of this kingdom, asserting therein that the articles of Limerick were infringed, and a direct breach thereby made of the public faith of the nation, solemnly pledged to them, are so far from meriting any favour from this House as yet, (thank God!) Protestant; that this House should rather seriously consider, whether they ought not to re-enact the penal code of Popery laws, or some part of it, which mistaken lenity has induced them within these few years to repeal, and whether the exigency of the times does not now demand such conduct from them.

I cannot forbear here observing the deception of this petition, in its introduction of the capitulation of Limerick; it dignifies it by the title of a treaty, and states that the Catholics purchased the benefits of this treaty, by the valuable consideration of surrendering their arms, and a great part of the kingdom. Treaty is generally used to signify an agreement between parties on some footing of equality with each other, at least respecting the subject matter of the agreement; but the business at Limerick in 1691, was a capitulation agreed to by the English generals, from ill-judged unseasonable mercy, and with a band of routed traitors, fairly fought down, the refuse of the sword, inclosed like rats in a trap, in a little town, in a corner of the kingdom, from whence they had no possibility of escaping, and in which they could make neither effectual nor long resistance; the certain victims of the avenging gibbet, or the sword; such was the treaty!

As to the consideration ; the Catholic troops at the time of the surrender had no fortrefs in the kingdom in their hands, except the castles of Ross and Clare, both of which could be reduced by two six-pounders ; and the city of Limerick, at that time battered to pieces about their ears, and some mountainous tracts of difficult access in the several counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, Clare and Mayo, occupied by detached parties of Catholic troops, without food, raiment or ammunition, and which might have been cleared of them in a few weeks, by a small part of the Protestant army ; such was their valuable consideration, and such the considerable part of the kingdom they surrendered.

The petition next demands the elective franchise for the Catholics as a right, from their unvarying loyalty, and dutiful submission to the laws ; from their service in the fleets and armies ; and their payment of taxes.

As to their loyalty and submission to the laws, I have already shewn the falsity of such a pretence ; as to their service in the fleets and armies, I suppose some of the meanest and most indigent Catholics at times do enlist in the armies, and enter in the fleet, from all posts of trust and emolument in which, as their petition states, they are excluded ; but then the Catholics, both gentlemen and yeomen, supply, and have heretofore supplied the French and Spanish armies with soldiers and mariners in a much greater proportion. As to the payment of taxes, the Catholics of Ireland are fully recompensed for it, by being very effectually protected by just and equal laws, both in their persons and properties, without their having any reasonable demand on the state, to invest them with political power and influence, on the score of such payments.

The petition states, that the right of elective franchise was finally and universally taken away from the Catholics of Ireland, so late as the first year of his majesty King George the Second. This truth is disgraced by a suppression of part of the truth ; for they should have stated, that it was not the first time, nor the second time, that the parliament of Ireland attempted, by their acts, to disable Catholics from voting at elections for members of parliament ; and such was the avowed disaffection of Irish Catholics to the succession of the house of Brunswick to the throne, as settled by the English act, intituled, " An act for the further limitation of the crown, and better securing the rights and liberties of the subject," for many years after the revolution, that the Irish parliament, in the second year of Queen Anne, 1703, thought the obliging of Catholics to take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration prior to their being allowed to vote for members of parliament, was a sufficient bar to their voting on such occasions ; and accordingly it was enacted by the act of 2d Ann. chap. 6th, sec. 24, as follows : " And for preventing Papists having it in their power to breed dissention amongst Protestants, by voting at elec-

tions for members of parliament, be it enacted, that from and after the 24th day of March, 1703, no freeholder, burgess, freeman, or inhabitant of this kingdom, being a Papist, or professing the Popish religion, shall at any time hereafter be capable of giving his or their vote, for electing of knights of any shires, or counties, within this kingdom; or citizens or burgesses to serve in any succeeding parliament, without first repairing to the general quarter sessions of the peace, to be holden for the counties, cities, or boroughs, wherein such Papists do inhabit and dwell, and there voluntarily taking the oath of allegiance, and also the oath of abjuration, and obtaining a certificate thereof from the clerk of the peace." Again, in the second year of George the First, chap. 19, sec. 7, it was enacted, " That no Papist should vote at any election for members of parliament, without having taken the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, six calendar months before the day of election, and that if he did, he should forfeit one hundred pounds on conviction, half to the informer, half to the king."

As all the Catholics of Ireland, who were of age able to take arms, had engaged in the rebellion, in the years 1689, 1690, and 1691, the estates of almost all the Catholics of Ireland, except the few who qualified themselves to take the benefit of the capitulation of Limerick, became forfeited by that rebellion, and were granted to Protestants; so that after the final reduction of the Irish rebels, in 1691, the number of Catholics, who enjoyed freehold or inheritable estates was very small, and they were excluded by the laws from all corporations; hence the number of Catholics qualified from their property to vote for members of parliament, was at the time of the pacification of this kingdom, after the revolution, so very insignificant, that they could give no alarm, to, nor excite the attention of the legislature; but the case began to alter in process of time, and many Catholics had obtained freeholds and estates of inheritance before the second of Anne, and became troublesome to Protestants on elections. The legislature therefore, in the second of Anne, thought fit to erect the barrier against their votes, which I have already mentioned. This barrier was strengthened by the act of the second of George the First; but Catholic ambition by degrees overpowering their religious principles, and inducing them to take almost any oaths, rather than be excluded from political power; the Irish Parliament, in the first year of George the Second, found it absolutely necessary, for the preservation of the Protestant establishment in church and state, utterly to incapacitate all Catholics from voting at the election of any members to serve in parliament; which act, in that particular, has been strengthened and confirmed by every act of parliament made since, to regulate the elections of members to serve in parliament.

Having thus exposed to this House the notorious falsehoods and misrepresentations contained in this petition, pretending to

exhibit the present state of the Catholics in this kingdom; but being really a false and libelous complaint to the King against the Parliament and Government of this kingdom, for a century past; the principal contrivers and compilers of which are well known in this city to be persons of the most obscure parentage and meanest education, who have accumulated wealth, partly by the most infamous means and partly by the indulgence of our constitution, admirably adapted to encourage the exertions, and preserve the acquisitions of industry to every subject; persons who have abandoned all pretensions to character, and whose impudence renders them proof against the assaults of scorn and disgrace, the suries which constantly haunt the libeller and the liar: I shall now lay before the House what the real state of the Roman Catholic subjects of this kingdom is. It is very plain from what I have already stated, that the laws, as they now stand, secure to them the fullest and most perfect enjoyment of their religion, liberty, and property, both real and personal, together with the compleatest powers of acquisition; they are deprived of no advantages enjoyed by Protestants, except of political power, which if we shall be so mad as to give to them, the present frame of this government must be thereby dissolved, and the state uprooted from its deepest foundation.

In respect to their exclusion from all places of trust and emolument, civil and military, and from corporations, the Irish Catholics are on the same footing with dissenters of all denominations in England; Roman Catholics are excluded from degrees in the English as well as in the Irish universities; they are equally prohibited in England from endowing schools for the education of their youth, as in Ireland; but in both countries they may establish as many schools as they please for the education of their youth. Catholics in Ireland are prohibited from keeping arms; no such prohibition is in England; but every Irish Catholic of any rank above the mere working artizan or peasant may obtain a licence to keep and carry arms, at the expence of one shilling, if he thinks fit to apply for it; and that the laws prohibiting the Catholics from the use of arms have not been put into execution in Ireland, except in times of public commotion, is evident, as thousands of Irish Catholics carried arms during the season of volunteering, without having procured any licence whatever. I believe Catholics may vote at the election of county representatives in England, serve on grand juries, but certainly they are excluded from voting for representatives for boroughs, because they are excluded from corporations. The only difference then in the situation of Catholics in England and in Ireland, is that Catholics in Ireland may be deprived of arms, unless they obtain licences for using them; that they are excluded from being members of grand juries, unless there shall be a deficiency of Protestant gentlemen of rank to compose them; and in a few cases they may, on challenge, be excluded from petit juries; and that

they are incapable of voting on elections of county representatives in parliament.

Whence has this difference naturally arisen? from the difference of the circumstances and situations of the two countries. The Catholics in England do not amount to one, in one hundred, of the whole nation; they regard all other Englishmen as their countrymen, and do not claim all, or any of the landed estates of England, as their natural birthrights, except such as they are themselves lawfully possessed of; they have not been subdued by their Protestant countrymen, after a series of the most bloody contests, in three successive desolating wars, nor do they entertain any animosity against them on the score of mutual slaughter and confiscations. In all these particulars the circumstances and situation of Ireland are directly the reverse. To take the proportion of Catholics and Protestants in Ireland from the petition, the Irish Catholics exceed the Protestants in the proportion of three to one. The Irish Catholics have been subdued in three great rebellions since the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth by English Protestant armies, and the lands and estates of the rebels divided amongst the soldiers of the conquering troops; the descendants of which soldiers, compose at this day the whole, or infinitely the greater part, of the Protestants of this country. The first great division of landed property in this kingdom, was made by King James the First, who succeeded Elizabeth, amongst his English and Scottish subjects, out of the forfeitures of the rebels who adhered to the earl Tyrone, whose rebellion was not suppressed till the close of the reign of Elizabeth. The second great division was made amongst the English soldiers who served under Cromwell, when he had completely subdued the Irish Catholics, out of the forfeitures of the rebels, who commenced that atrocious rebellion against King Charles the First, in which they massacred many thousands of innocent Protestants, men, women, and children, in cold blood; the division then made, was in the reign of King Charles the Second, legally confirmed by the act of settlement and explanation. The third great division of landed property in Ireland amongst Protestants, was made in the reign of King William and Queen Mary, out of the forfeitures of Irish Catholics, on account of the rebellion which was finally quelled in 1691. There is scarce a title of a Protestant nobleman or gentleman in this kingdom to his estate, which is not derived either mediately or immediately from the grants of Elizabeth, of William and Mary, or under the acts of settlement and explanation. The Irish Catholics to a man esteem all Protestants, as usurpers of their estates; they, to this day, settle these estates on the marriages of their sons and daughters; they have accurate maps of them; they published in Dublin, within these ten years, a map of the kingdom, cantoned out amongst the old Irish proprietors; they look for political power only to enable them to assert their

claims with effect, which they will do if ever they have power, not by tedious forms of law, but acts of parliament, or the sword; they abhor all Protestants, and all Englishmen, as plunderers and oppressors, exclusive of their detestation of them on a religious account; no nation on earth being more wedded to the Romish superstition than the generality of the Irish Catholics; they have but one term in their language to signify both Protestant and Englishman, to wit. "*Safonagh*." If then the Parliament of this kingdom can ever be so infatuated as to put the Irish Catholic on the same footing of civil privileges with the English Catholic, or on a better; and if the English nation shall ever countenance such a frenzy, the direct and immediate consequence (exclusive of the utter ruin of all the Irish Protestants) must be, either that this kingdom will be for ever severed from the British empire, or that it must be again conquered by a British army: for in truth the Protestants in Ireland are but the British garrison in an enemy's country, and if entirely deserted by the parent state, must surrender at discretion, though, with a very little help, they are still able to repel the common enemy.

The two privileges which the Catholics chiefly complain of being deprived of, as well in the kind of writ issued by Edward Byrne (a quondam retail grocer in this city, and their chief deputy to his Majesty) for summoning their convention as in their petition, and which they in a manner demand, are, the privilege that Catholics shall be summoned on grand juries equally with Protestants; and that they shall obtain the elective franchise, or be rendered capable of voting at the elections of representatives in Parliament. Whoever understands the important powers, respecting the due administration of justice, and the maintenance of our constitution in church and state, vested in grand juries, will be convinced that it would be very unsafe to permit such bodies, either in the whole or in part, to be composed of Catholics: And if the elective franchise shall be granted to Catholic freeholders in counties without taking boroughs into consideration, see from their own statement what the consequence must be; they exceed the Protestants in every county in the kingdom, for though the Protestant dissenters are pretty numerous in four counties in the North of Ireland, yet even in these four counties the Catholics exceed them in number; they compose the great mass of the tenantry throughout the kingdom. Gentlemen of landed estates, though Protestants, will be so far blinded to their true interests by their ambition to have numbers of freeholders capable of voting on their estates, that they will directly change all the tenures for terms of years of their Popish tenants, into tenancies for lives; as Catholics are now also intitled to purchase lands in fee, they will turn all the tenures under them into tenures for lives; thus, from the superior number of Catholics, there will be immediately in every county a swarm of Catholic

forty-shilling freeholders; and though Catholic freeholders, who have freeholds of twenty pounds yearly value or above, should be the only Catholic freeholders, to whom the elective franchise should be extended in this session; yet, if the principle of the exclusion of Catholics from voting shall at once be invaded, we shall find they will soon claim and obtain the elective franchise, for their forty-shilling freeholders, and to be put on an equal footing in that respect with Protestants. Once make a breach in the rampart, and retrenchments will be found insufficient defences: Such of them as hold their tenures under Protestant landlords will revolt from them, and abandon their interest on the first election, if they shall be informed by their priests, that their landlords interest militates against the political interest of their sect; within a very few years, by their numbers, they will out-vote the Protestant freeholders in every county in the kingdom, except two or three, where the Protestant interest may perhaps prevail for a few years longer, and they will certainly return such representatives to parliament, as they shall think most favourable to the Catholic interest: There is another circumstance too, which renders the extension of the elective franchise to Catholic freeholders still more dangerous, and that is, the scheme of reform, which is now obtruded on this nation with more than common industry, by the ministers and servants of the rump of a disgraced and reprobated English faction; whose endeavours in Great Britain, to plunge their country into the rebellion and anarchy of the French assassins, have been lately defeated by the activity of the British ministry, and good sense of the nation. Two plans of reform of the representation of the people in parliament, are suggested; the one is, the disfranchisement at once of all the boroughs, the dissolution of corporations, and the increase of the numbers of representatives for counties, and a few large cities and towns: The other is, the disfranchisement of all decayed boroughs; that is, those boroughs in which few or no inhabitants are left; and the opening of all other boroughs, by giving all the freeholders, who live within a certain distance of them, a right to vote at the elections of representatives of these boroughs. It is evident that in either case, the extension of the elective franchise to Catholic freeholders will enable them to return representatives in Parliament, for all or most of the boroughs in the kingdom; when no members of the House of Commons in Ireland shall be returned, but such as are devoted to the Catholic interest, it is easy to foresee that all laws excluding Catholics from sitting in Parliament will be repealed, and that we shall have a Catholic House of Commons; the grant of the elective franchise to Catholic freeholders will make it the direct interest of the whole Catholic body to push on, either the one or the other mode of reform, with all their power; the destruction of the Protestant constitution in church and state, will be the certain and successful effort of a Catholic House of

Commons; and when the Government of this country becomes Catholic, the people of Ireland will be immediately taught, that it is at least as great an absurdity in politics (if not a greater) to have a Protestant king over a Popish nation, as it was thought by the people of England in the reign of King James II. to have a Popish king over a Protestant nation; and as the house of Stuart may now be said to be extinct, the Catholics will attempt to form a republic in Ireland, independent of Great Britain, to which their connection with the levelling republican mobs of Belfast and Derry, and with the levelling faction of Great Britain, and their plans of resumption of the estates now in the hands of Protestants, will also very strongly incline them: and as this nation is not able of itself to cope with Great Britain, the Irish Catholics will again invoke the assistance of France, which, though now a distracted nation, is yet a great and powerful one; and thus will Ireland, as during the revolution war, become a field of battle for Great Britain and France, and be again desolated: Let the issue of such a contest be what it may, I am justified in declaring, that if the British ministers (as has been pretty roundly asserted in this House) favour the present claims and designs of the Irish Catholics, they are either ignorant of the present state of this country, and too short-sighted and ill informed to discern the true interest of Great Britain; or base enough (which I sincerely hope is not the case) to betray it; and this I will venture to affirm, that if Great Britain shall suffer this country to be for ever torn from the British empire, and to become dependant upon, or annexed to France, as one of its departments, she will not long support her own consequence in Europe, or even independence; the French, with the port of Brest at one side of the channel, and the noble ports of Cork, Kinsale, and the Shannon's Mouth at the other, with Irish provisions to victual, and Irish mariners to man their fleets, will soon become an overmatch at sea for Great Britain; and may then waft over her almost innumerable armies, to make a total conquest of the British islands. I will also tell British ministers another truth, that they are greatly deceived, if they have been induced to believe, that an Irish Catholic is, ever was, or ever will be, a faithful, loyal subject of a British Protestant King, or a Protestant Government*.

* It is proper here to insert a translation of an extract from the oath taken by all Roman Catholic bishops at their consecration:

"I will assist and aid the Popes of Rome to retain and defend the Roman Papacy and the royalties of Saint Peter, against all mankind, saving the rights of my own order.

"I will take care to preserve, defend, increase, and promote, the rights, honours, privileges, and authority, of the holy Roman church, of our lord the Pope, and his successors."

I will now trespass a little longer on the House, to examine whether the present conduct of the Roman Catholics intitles them to any favour from this House. Edward Byrne, a man not long since a retail grocer in this city, thinks fit to send circular letters to all the Romish priests in this kingdom, stating, that the Irish Catholics laboured under great grievances, in being excluded from the benefit of trials by juries (a base untruth) and from the elective franchise; and directing them to give notice in their respective chapels, of elections to be held therein, of delegates from every Romish congregation, to meet in some certain place in each county, for the purpose of electing a delegate or delegates to repair to Dublin, and there associate themselves with a number of persons, stiling themselves a Catholic Committee; and form a convention; to consider of a proper method to free the whole body of Irish Catholics from these pretended grievances. The mandates of this Catholic quondam grocer are executed by all the Romish priests throughout the kingdom, with great punctuality; and delegates to attend and form the convention are regularly elected; the same mode of election being precisely pursued, with that adopted for the election of the convention of French assassins. A convention of Irish Catholics, thus elected, meet publicly in Dublin, they consult and deliberate together many days in a private manner, excluding all people from their debates, their meeting being public, but their consultations private; and in the end they compose, and produce, a most malevolent, rancorous, and false libel against the Protestant government of Ireland, which libel they address and send to his Majesty, under the form of a petition, by certain persons specially deputed for that purpose, at the head of which deputation is the grocer who issued the writs for the election of the assembly, and they afterwards disperse this libel, printed and published by their avowed authority, throughout the nation, for the purpose of inflaming Catholics of all ranks to sedition and rebellion against the government: I hesitate not, as a lawyer, to declare such proceedings unconstitutional and illegal, and such convention an unconstitutional and illegal assembly; and that the members of it are liable to indictments and informations for such conduct, and to heavy punishments when convicted. The Catholics of the lower ranks, are at this moment assembled in large bodies, with arms in their hands, breaking into, robbing and burning, the houses of the peaceable Protestant inhabitants of the counties of Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, and Meath, and even in the county of Dublin; making public declarations, that they will not suffer any Protestant to reside within these counties, or in the kingdom; and the contagion is spreading through the nation: So that if the army, consisting of English Protestants, had not given some check to their fury, we may reasonably suppose we should, by this time, see the habitations of all Protestants in the kingdom in flames,

and their persons butchered, as in the year 1641, this insurrection of the Catholics being so sudden and unexpected: And every man of sense knows, that the insurrections of the vulgar, if continued for a length of time, are always privately encouraged and supported by persons of better rank, who conceal themselves, till the success of their inferior ruffians induces them openly to avow their mischievous designs; such are the present merits of the Catholic body: Do they intitle them to an extension and addition of privileges? Is this a time for delivering the whole political power of the state into their hands? Common sense revolts at the frantic proposition, self-preservation, and the experience of ages; loudly call on all Protestants to condemn it with every mark of reprobation. I cannot close, without making some animadversions on what fell from a few, thank Heaven! a very few members of this House, relative to the present question, on the night the address to his Majesty, in consequence of the speech of the Lord Lieutenant, was agreed to by this House: On the discovery, and consequent publication of the writs of Edward Byrne, for summoning a Catholic convention to meet in Dublin, (for they were accidentally discovered) the Protestants of this country very properly took the alarm; the Protestant gentry of several counties, as well as the inhabitants of several cities, boroughs, and towns corporate, throughout the nation, assembled and entered into resolutions, expressive of their indignation against the design of Edward Byrne, contained in his writs, as nothing less than a scheme of a conspiracy, to raise and excite a Popish rebellion in this country, which in truth it is. The grand juries of almost all the counties in the kingdom, assembled at the summer assizes in the year 1792, and consisting of the principal Protestant gentlemen of these counties, expressed by their resolutions the same resentment against, and the same opinions of, the writs of Edward Byrne; and their determination to support with their lives and fortunes the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. The corporation of the city of Dublin, the most ancient, respectable, and numerous corporate body in this kingdom, met in a post assembly in September 1792, and, without a dissentient voice, drew up a letter to be sent to all corporations, magistrates, and members of both Houses of Parliament in Ireland: This letter in a very clear, concise, and nervous style, expressed the decided disapprobation of this the first corporation in the kingdom, of the writs of Edward Byrne, and of the claims of Irish Catholics to any other privileges or advantages, than those which they then enjoyed. It stated, that the Irish Catholics ought to be contented with what they then enjoyed; that is, "the most perfect toleration of their religion, the fullest security of their property, and the most complete personal liberty; and that they ought not now, or hereafter, to attempt any interference in the Government of the kingdom, as such interference would be incompatible with the

Protestant ascendancy, which the members of the corporation declared themselves resolved, with their lives and fortunes to maintain." And then the letter defined the precise meaning of the words, Protestant Ascendancy in the following terms:

A Protestant King of Ireland—A Protestant Parliament—A Protestant Hierarchy—Protestant Electors and Government—The Benches of Justice—The Army and the Revenue—Through all their Branches and Details, *Protestant*.

And this system supported by a connection with the Protestant Realm of Great Britain.

In this definition of the meaning of the words Protestant Ascendancy, the corporation of Dublin adhered scrupulously to the laws of the land; these laws confine the enjoyment of all the enumerated offices to Protestants only. On the night the address to his Majesty was agreed to, the few gentlemen I have already spoken of, without any apparent incitement, and without any reference to the subject, then rather discoursed of, than debated; but merely, as I conjecture, to shew their intention, to support any innovation which might be attempted in the constitution in the course of this session; and their contempt of the opinions of the great bulk of the Protestant gentry in this kingdom, broke out into the most extravagant invectives against the grand juries of the kingdom, and their resolutions; that is, against the first Protestant gentlemen in rank, character, and property in this nation, and many of them members of this House, and their opinions; and against the corporation of the city of Dublin; the conduct of which, in publishing the letter I have mentioned, was not only reprobated in the severest terms, but mockery and derision were added to abuse; not with much success indeed, for the principal mocker on that occasion, like General Paoli (as is recorded by his illustrious biographer, Mr. Boswell) never laughs; indeed he cannot, the muscles of his countenance cannot be relaxed to a laugh, they have been moulded to express the serious operations of his mind, which never deviate into the puerilities of mirth and humour. It was also asserted publicly in this House, that the grand jurors of the several counties in this kingdom, at the last summer assizes, were packed by the several sheriffs, by the procurement of Government; and that juries, so packed, were solicited on the part of Government, to enter into resolutions unfavourable to the present pretensions of Catholics. Whatever information the gentlemen who made these assertions in this House, have had, to ground such an accusation on, I am certain it was false information. First, as to packing grand juries, it must be false, because the gentlemen who composed the grand juries in the several counties, were the Protestant gentry of the first rank, as to character and property, in their respective counties; 2dly, as to influence of Government being used to procure them to enter into resolutions expressive of their disapprobation of the Catholic claims, I

have it in my power to deny the truth of it, because I know two particular counties in which the influence of men high in station, and firmly connected with the present Administration, was exerted to prevent, as much as possible, the grand juries of these two counties, from entering into any resolutions expressing their opinions of the claims of Catholics. The letter published by the corporation of the city of Dublin, as little merited the reflections thrown upon it by these gentlemen, as the resolutions of the grand juries. It is a letter which the patriotism, and good sense it exhibits, together with the clear nervous style in which it is written, exclusive of the respect due to the composers, the first, most ancient, most numerous, most wealthy, and unquestionably loyal, corporation in this kingdom, ought to have protected, at least from the attacks of contempt and derision.

I felt no inclination to laugh at that powerful witticism played off against the letter, by the question, "It is necessary for the support of the Protestant interest that an exciseman should be a Protestant?" I envy not such wit, nor can I laugh at it; though, thank God, I can laugh upon occasion. I confess indeed, I was vexed to the heart to hear the minister in this House, by way of clearing himself from the accusation of having exerted influence with the corporation of Dublin, to induce them to publish this letter, declare his disapprobation of the letter, as I then thought, and still think, that every person, who has the true interest of his Majesty and of this kingdom at heart, and thoroughly understands it, ought not only to have approved of the sentiments contained in it, but to have gloried in them; and I felt at once the sensations of the most poignant pain, and glowing indignation, to see the corporation of the city of Dublin, the capital of the kingdom, and the second city in his Majesty's dominions, publicly sacrificed at the altar of Popery; and the Protestant ascendancy dragged forth, like Sampson, to make sport for the Philistines.

As the gentlemen I have alluded to, have held it heretofore as a maxim, that representatives were bound to pursue the instructions of their constituents, the contemptuous and severe treatment the letter of the city of Dublin had met with, from one of its representatives in Parliament, suggested to these gentlemen the necessity of some expedient, to veil as much as possible this notorious inconsistency of political conduct; and what was the expedient resorted to? Sometime ago a society had been formed in this city, which styled itself, the Whigs of the Capital; it was not composed of the most respectable citizens; the conduct of this society, and the design of its institution, may be collected from the following anecdote. The whigs of the capital raised a subscription, and printed, at their own expence, twenty thousand copies of Mr. Thomas Paine's works, which they distributed through the nation partly gratis, and partly at the low price of one penny;

this they stiled "disseminating political knowledge." The good sense of the nation soon discovered itself, by very general expressions of disapprobation of the conduct of the Whigs of the Capital, and finding the tide running pretty strongly against them, they changed their course, abandoned the title of whigs of the capital, and having procured some gentlemen of more consideration than themselves to join them, they formed a new club, under the title of "the Society of United Irishmen." The leaven however of the whigs of the capital, remained incorporated with this society, and several seditious publications having appeared as their literary productions, his Majesty's Attorney General thought fit to file informations against several publishers of these productions; and this new society became as unpopular, and as much reprobated, as the whigs of the capital. One of the sheriffs of the city, however, was prevailed upon to assemble this society into a coffee-house in this city, and to give them a new name, by stiling them an Aggregate Meeting of the Freemen and Freeholders of the City of Dublin; the whole faction assembled on this occasion, and amounted to about one hundred persons, several of them of very mean condition, and more than one half of them Roman Catholics. A string of resolutions was then presented to this assembly, which they readily agreed to; some of which resolutions relating to Roman Catholics, are directly contrary to the sentiments contained in the letter published by the city of Dublin. Such aggregate meeting has been publicly declared in Parliament to be the city of Dublin; and their resolutions, the resolutions of the city of Dublin; but such political legerdemain is too clumsily performed to impose, even on the most inattentive observer. The changes in the society I have mentioned, put me in mind of the transformations frequent in the insect tribe; first an aurelia, then a grub, and then a butterfly.

I cannot forbear to make a few more observations on the parliamentary conduct of the gentlemen I have been speaking of, on this occasion; they tell us (on what authority I know not) that the English minister has declared his sovereign will and pleasure, that the Irish Parliament should grant every privilege to the Catholics of this kingdom, they shall please to demand, and that therefore we must comply: And they declare themselves ready to second such views of the English minister: What consistency of parliamentary conduct do these gentlemen display! They have been declaiming for a series of years, against the influence of the English ministry in this House; now they openly tell us, that we must obey the dictates of the English minister; and that they are ready to obey them themselves even to the ruin of the nation; they tell us, with the utmost exultation and triumph, that the English minister has abandoned the support of the Protestant interest in Ireland, and is determined to exalt popery on its ruins; if the case be so, which I confess I do not believe, we have procured

the enmity of the English ministry, by the machinations of these gentlemen themselves, and the system of politics which their fatal oratory has persuaded this nation to adopt, for a series of years last past; from about the middle of the reign of King Henry the Eighth to the reign of Queen Anne, there is a number of acts of the Irish Parliament, all yet unrepealed, which declare that the kingdom of Ireland is inseparably annexed, united, and belonging to, and dependant upon, the imperial crown of England; and yet these gentlemen have been contriving ways and means for these several years last past to weaken and destroy the sovereignty of the crown of England over this country; they have turned haberdashers of all the Anti-English measures which have been pursued in this kingdom at any time since the beginning of the reign of King Charles the First, and dealt out to us by retail, all the motions tending to separate and divide this kingdom for ever from the British empire, heretofore made by Lord Macguire, Sir Phelim O'Neil, and their adherents, (the authors and contrivers of the rebellion and massacre of the Protestants of this country in the year 1641) in the Irish Houses of Lords and Commons. They actually induced this Parliament to enact into laws, some of the acts of the Popish convention, assembled in this city by King James the Second, after his abdication, and styled by him a Parliament; and they have proposed others of them to this House, as proper to be enacted; which, if enacted, would root all the Protestant clergy out of this kingdom; in these last, they have as yet miscarried, and constantly complain of the miscarriage in their list of grievances, recited with great solemnity and exactness, at the beginning of every session. If then, these gentlemen are patriots, so were Lord Macguire, and Sir Phelim O'Neil, and so were the members of the Popish convention, assembled by King James, all whose acts were annulled, and their proceedings ordered to be burned, by the Irish act of the 7th of William, chap. the 3d, part of which I shall recite to you, to shew what the opinion of your forefathers was of this convention and their acts. "It states, that no parliament can be holden in this kingdom, but by and under the authority of the King of England; because the kingdom of Ireland is inseparably annexed, united, and belonging, to the imperial crown of England; from whence it follows, that whoever is King of England is, *ipso facto*, King of Ireland; it states, that several persons had assembled in Dublin, by the authority of the late King James the Second, and that they pretended to be, and called themselves by the name of a Parliament; and passed several pretended acts and statutes, all which pretended acts were formed and designed, in manifest opposition to the sovereignty of the crown of England, and for the utter destruction of the Protestant interest in this kingdom; and it enacts, that this convention was an unlawful and rebellious assembly, and that all its acts and proceedings should be void, erased

out of the journals, and burned." Let me just stop here to contemplate the different fates of patriots in different ages: The Irish patriots, Lord Macguire, Sir Phelim O'Neil, and their adherents, perished on a gibbet; the members of the convention in 1689, perished by the sword, or were punished by confiscation and exile; but the Irish patriots of the present day who have adopted their politics, and retailed their speeches and motions, are loaded with riches, and decorated with honours. Upon the whole then, it is very apparent that if the English ministry have abandoned the Protestant interest in Ireland, as these gentlemen assert, they have been induced to do so, by the ungrateful and undutiful conduct which the very gentlemen, who now glory in the depression of the of the Irish Protestant interest, have led the Protestants of Ireland to adopt, in respect to Great Britain; and that they themselves reduced the Irish Protestants to the situation of the sheep in the fable, whom the wolves, by false professions prevailed on to discharge their dogs and their shepherds, and then worried and devoured.

The speech from the throne does not however warrant the assertions of these gentlemen, that the ministry of England have abandoned the Protestant interest in Ireland; and that it is the intention of the English minister that we shall grant the Irish Catholics all privileges they may think fit to demand. It desires us only "seriously to consider the situation of the Irish Catholics, and consider it with liberality for the purposes of strengthening and cementing a general union of sentiment among all classes and descriptions of his Majesty's subjects, in support of the established constitution," and the Lord Lieutenant in the speech declares, "that he will strenuously exert the power with which he is entrusted, for the maintenance of the constitution in church and state, as the best security for the liberty of the subject, and the prosperity of Ireland." And I have, according to the recommendation in the speech, seriously considered the real state of the Catholics of Ireland, which I find to be a state of perfect security both of their liberty and property; and not that state untruly depicted, in that false and acrimonious libel, their petition to his Majesty. The opinion I have formed on the whole matter, is that it is utterly inconsistent with the safety and preservation of the present Irish constitution in church and state, and utterly incompatible with the true interest of the whole British empire to invest the Catholics with any other privileges than they now are by law entitled to, and I will therefore oppose this bill, in every stage of it; convicted as I am in my conscience, that by acting thus, I do my duty to my God, my king and my country. I utterly from my heart disclaim the operation on my mind, of any partial or interested views, in thus forming and delivering my sentiments on this occasion. I oppose the present pretensions of the Catholics of Ireland, considering them in the light of a great

political body, which it is not only dangerous, but destructive to the constitution, further to encourage, or to strengthen by the accumulation of new privileges. In thus publicly declaring my sentiments, I even do some violence to my private feelings and connections, as I live in the strictest intimacy and friendship with several Roman Catholics, for whom I have the sincerest regard and esteem, knowing them to be persons of the greatest worth, integrity and honour.

Hon. D. BROWNE. Sir, I will not go at large into the question. This is not the time for it; but I cannot avoid making some reply to the learned gentleman, from whom, certainly, I expected more temperance, and less prejudice.

The articles of Limerick, to which the learned gentleman has alluded, had been drawn by an ancestor of his; those articles I lately read, and do affirm, that as far as a treaty could be binding, they did secure to the Catholics of certain counties the liberty and security they enjoyed previous to that period. The learned gentleman has charged three millions of his Majesty's subjects with disloyalty, and the instances he has added to prove his charge are of a singular nature.

I do assert, Sir, that the articles of Limerick were infringed by acts of parliament; that notwithstanding that infringement, for a period of one hundred years, during which time Great Britain was involved in several wars and rebellions, yet not a single act of opposition to the English government can be charged in that time to the Roman Catholics. I will not, Sir, say, that the learned gentleman has mistated, but he certainly has been materially misinformed. The Irish brigades consisted originally of persons who were driven from this country for their attachment to the house of Stuart, but that they have been recruited from Ireland is not the fact; they consist of the descendants of those original settlers, of foreigners, and natives of France; this is the fact the learned gentleman gives to prove, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland are waging war in foreign countries against England.

The learned gentleman should, in extenuation of his charges against the Catholic body, have stated what he knew of their merits. He is here as a senator, an advocate for the people, not against them; as he did go to France to find out instances of Catholic disloyalty, which, I own, I think was travelling far for charges against the Catholics of Ireland, he should have told you, that when the Irish Catholics in the French colleges were applied to on behalf of the French nation, that had given them what the impolitic laws of their own country had refused—education and profession—to assist and direct in an invasion of Ireland, that, to a man, they refused.

That the Irish Catholics resident in Spain, with which country England was also at war, from their attachment to English inte-

rest, were driven from the sea-ports of Spain, where they principally inhabited, and were confined as prisoners in the internal parts of that country, victims at once of the impolicy of their own country, and jealousy of its enemies.

The defence of the Catholics of Ireland could be rested on the charge of the learned gentleman; his accusations does not go to them; they are applied to the descendants of those who were one hundred years ago inhabitants of Ireland. Sir, I feel the difficulty of contending in any discussion with the learned gentleman, much more in matter of law; but I have lately read with particular attention the penal laws against the Roman Catholics, and if the statutes do not state what they do not mean, the chattel property of the Catholics is subject, as real estate heretofore, to a conforming son of a Roman Catholic; but I am convinced that it is so from an omission, and not from the intention of the law.

With respect to the laws that are stated to give advantages, in point of trade, to Protestants over the Roman Catholics, I do not exactly remember how far they give that advantage; but the title of the law complained of is some proof that they do give those advantages, it is entitled, "An act for the encouragement of Protestant strangers in corporate towns." But I have a particular recollection of the laws that deprive Roman Catholics of the elective franchise; a short statement of them will be the best refutation of the learned gentleman's assertion, that they were enacted on state necessities, and the divisions and disturbances occasioned by Roman Catholics and Protestants.

In the 8th of Anne a law passed, obliging the Catholic to take the oath of abjuration of the right of the house of Stuart to the crown, to entitle him to vote at an election. This act arose from the jealousy of the times, on the point of the succession to the crown; and while those were yet alive who had sworn allegiance to the family of Stuart, while James the Second lived, who had been acknowledged sovereign of these realms, the act operated, and prevented every principled Catholic from voting; but in the lapse of twenty years, which included the reign of Anne and George, the principle died with the persons who held it, and with the sovereign they had sworn to.

The descendants of those Catholics found, in the auspicious reign of the house of Brunswick, that happiness and security for which governments are founded, and unclogged by the prejudices of their ancestors, were ready to swear allegiance to the house of Brunswick, and enjoy the constitution under its beneficent dominion. But the discerning eye of intolerance saw through this new principle of the people; it saw that the political pretence for this deprivation was at an end, and at once laying aside the mask of political necessity, by the act of the 1st of George the Second, stepped between the people and the barrier of their allegiance, and made the sacrifice of their religious faith the pur-

chase of the right of voting. I congratulate the House on the sacrifice of prejudice to the true interests of Ireland they are about to make. The prophecies of the learned gentleman, of the effects of the sacrifice, will be verified in the same manner as the prophecy of 1788, on allowing Catholics to take leases and buy lands. As the friend of the Catholics, I feared much for them from the threats, on a former night, of the learned gentleman. I am perfectly released from my fear, and prophesy, in my turn, from our proceedings, the peace, the prosperity and union of Ireland.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH. If there is not a second man in the House who thinks that the Roman Catholics ought to receive no farther indulgence, and who wishes to oppose the introduction of the bill, there is no manner of occasion to debate it in this stage.

Right Hon. G. OGLE. Sir, I am that man who will oppose it in this stage, and in every other stage. Sir, after the very able, the learned, the argumentative, the honest and spirited speech of my honourable and learned friend, [Dr. Duigenan] for which he has my public thanks, and for which he deserves the thanks of every Protestant in Ireland, it would be vanity in me to attempt placing the question in any new point of view; he has indeed left me a beaten field; nothing has escaped his zeal, his vigilance and research. And therefore I again thank him for the able and manly support he has given to the deserted cause of the Protestants of Ireland; a cause which I never will desert; a cause which, in my earliest life, I learned to revere, and which I will maintain (careless and fearless of what the consequences public or private may be to me) to the last hour of my existence. Sir, in the last session I did declare, that I thought it impossible to make any further concession to the Roman Catholics, without injuring the Protestant ascendancy; a word that I am proud to use—to use in the same sense this honourable and respectable city has done, and for which they have been so indecently calumniated. These were the sentiments I then declared; they were the sentiments which the experience and reflection of many years had confirmed in my mind. My right honourable friend [Mr. Hobart] has said they are not to receive their wishes in full. Good God! what must their wishes have been if they are not to be satisfied with what the right honourable gentleman, has proposed? They are to receive the elective franchise unlimited. This is to be done, because, as he says, there would remain a sore place if any restraint or limitation should remain. I tell the right honourable gentleman, there will indeed remain a sore place—but it will be in the Protestant mind.

They are to be made grand jurors; they are to have all civil employments—Sheriffs, I suppose, are civil officers; they are to be

justices of the peace; they are to vote at elections, and, if England permits, they are to have the army and navy open to them. What then remains for Protestants? The throne, the parliament and the judgment-seat; and what must their petition be, when all these concessions do not come up to its demand? Last year you granted much, this year you are desired to grant more, and does he suppose this will tranquillize the country? No; for you are told by the right honourable gentleman, that what you do grant will not satisfy them; their desires are insatiable, as if their appetite grew on what it fed upon.

Sir, let the real or affected liberality of gentlemen disguise the matter as they please; let them turn it and twist it into what forms or what shapes their ingenuity can invent, Proteous will return to his own proper form at last; is it a question of power; they know it is, and will you grant away your dearest rights, or will you maintain them? For my part, I will never grant them away. Are you aware of what this will lead to? I will tell you what it will lead to, either an union with, or a total separation, from England; for is any man so unacquainted with the spirit of Popish intolerance; is any man so little informed of the history of this country as not to know, that when they attain to power, they will use it to the oppression of the Protestant, who must then fly to the succour of England? Sir, hitherto I always thought that no possible case could occur that would make me consent to a union; I would rather lay down my head upon that table, to be severed from my body, than give such a consent. Alas! Sir, I did not then think I should live to see the Protestant cause deserted; but I declare, before Almighty God, I would rather pass an act of union than this bill; I speak my feelings openly, fearless of the consequence; why should I disguise them? If I did, the Protestants would despise me; the Presbyterians would despise me; nay, even the Papists themselves; nay, worse, I should despise myself.

A gentleman has said, we were not ripe for this business last year, but we are ripe now. Where did he find this ripeness? Was it in the resolutions of the corporations? in the resolutions of the grand juries? No; it was in the mandate of the British minister. Let that minister make his experiments at home, where he may be supposed to know something of the country; let him try will an English parliament abolish the test act; he knows they will not. Why then should he presume to direct the Protestant gentlemen of Ireland to abandon their situation in the state! But this is to tranquillize! How is it to tranquillize? Have Protestants no feelings? Have they no souls? Why should they be discarded from their situation? Are they clamorous? Are they levellers? Are they disloyal? Have they any crimes to expiate?—any faults to varnish? No. What has been their conduct? Steady, undeviating loyalty; obedience and affection to

their sovereign and to the laws; constant readiness to expose their lives and fortunes in his defence; unshaken attachment to the British nation; affectionate partiality to British manners. And what is the reward of all this? They are called upon to surrender their all, because it is the will of the British minister. For one I do resist this order: God forbid that any earthly inducements, any private motive, or personal apprehension, should influence me to prostrate myself before the rising splendour of his Catholic orb.

Mr. BLAKE (of the county of Galway.) When I differ in opinion from the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Ogle] who spoke last, I do it with the utmost diffidence, conscious of his superiority in abilities, information, and experience; nor do I even form a hope that any thing that can fall from me, will convey conviction to his mind; I merely deliver it as a declaration of my sentiments.

So far from coinciding in opinion with the right honourable gentleman, that the emancipation of the Roman Catholics of Ireland would tend to the subversion of our constitution, in my mind it is a measure absolutely necessary to its preservation, besieged as it is by foreign and domestic enemies.

It is natural to mankind to be less solicitous for the welfare of our neighbour's property than our own. Our Roman Catholic brethren see us in possession of a glorious and enviable constitution; they have and would continue to leave us in the uninterrupted enjoyment of it; but were it assailed, as it is at present, by wicked and designing men, men whose political creed is such, that no modification we can devise of our present constitution can satisfy, as long as we are blessed with a monarch on the throne; I say, that in such a situation, we have no claim upon our Roman Catholic brethren for assistance: were we to call upon them, they could reply to us with justice, "Make us participators of the benefits of your constitution, and we shall with alacrity share in the dangers of its protection; but you cannot expect us to come forward in support of any constitution, as long as our oppression continues one of its principles." This, I say, might have been their language while in a state of bondage; but, now I trust we shall bind them in interest to maintain that constitution, and in gratitude to support that legislature, whose wisdom and liberality will induce them to receive them to a participation of its blessings.

Now that we have our Roman Catholic brethren in contemplation, (and that at the instance of our beloved sovereign) let us, in the name of God, do things handsomely, and not retail them out ounce by ounce, session after session; let us, by one decisive blow, obliterate all distinction, and by that act of union

close the defirative terms of Protestant and Roman Catholic in general and conciliating appellations of Christian and Irishman.

Impressed with these ideas, and conscious of the rectitude of my intentions, I shall, through each stage of this business, be the sanguine, though feeble advocate of this numerous, oppressed, and loyal body of people.

Mr. BAGWELL. Sir, I have not given any opinion, as yet, respecting that part of the propositions of the right honourable gentleman, [Mr. Hobart] which goes to the elective franchise, nor shall I do so, until the bill be brought in; but in every other respect, I am decided as to the propriety of repealing all penal statutes which militate against the Catholics, and not equally so against the Protestants: all distinctions of that nature should be done away, and also all advantages not trenching on the constitution, should be given to the Catholics which the Protestants enjoy.

Sir, by the 14th and 15th of Charles the Second, all Protestants, strangers and others, residing, or coming to reside in cities and towns corporate, are entitled to their freedom of trade, on payment of 20s. to the chief magistrate. The benefit of this act I strongly recommend to the right honourable gentleman to extend by his bill to the Roman Catholics, as well as to the Protestants, and thus give a solid, substantial advantage to them, by relieving them from the heavy and oppressive demand of tolls, which on most occasions operate in opposition to the interests of the industrious citizen.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON. Sir, I cannot agree *in toto* with the right honourable gentleman who has made the motion. Certainly I am for removing some of the restraints under which the Roman Catholics lie, and would go as far any man in the country to render their situation not only comfortable, but even enviable: but I consider the present time as rather premature; and I am for postponing the further consideration of this business until the 4th of next month.

The SPEAKER informed him, that the motion before the House was only for leave to bring in a bill for the relief of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects of Ireland.

Mr. STANLEY. However unwilling I may be to trespass on the House at this late hour, yet, Sir, I think this is a question of such magnitude, and in which the interests of Ireland are so deeply involved, that every man, let him fill ever so small a space in the political world, is bound to speak his sentiments, and to contribute, as far as he can, his mite to the public happiness; I cannot, therefore, prevail upon myself to repress these senti-

ments of pleasure and satisfaction which I feel, to observe that the period is at length arrived, when we are about to conquer old and deep-rooted prejudices, and that a spirit of benevolence and toleration has succeeded to persecution and bigotry.

I rejoice that we are now about to do an act which will pour some new and salutary blood into the veins of the constitution, and to restore the most loyal, the most peaceable, and the most oppressed subjects in this land to those civil rights, and to that share in the democratical part of the constitution, of which they had been so long and so unjustly deprived. I think, Sir, the measure proposed by the right honourable Secretary, is fraught with liberality, justice, and true constitutional policy, and at the same time that I think the Catholics will thereby be put into possession of true political liberty, it guards with a jealous eye, and with a cautious circumspection, those ramparts which were erected at the revolution, for the security of a Protestant throne and a Protestant establishment.

I have always thought, Sir, that the entire of the penal code enacted against Catholics in this country were highly impolitic, unjust, and illiberal. I have always thought that they were a stain and disgrace to our laws, and I wished to see them obliterated from our statute books. They were not only repugnant to the constitution of a free country, but they drew a just reproach and contempt on the national character.

But of all the other laws which oppressed this unfortunate people, that act of the first of George the Second, which deprived them of their franchise, that grand criterion which distinguishes a freeman from a slave, the right of voting for representatives who are to make laws to bind their lives, liberty, and property, which my Lord Holt called the noblest birth right and most invaluable privilege of the subject; I say that law, of all others, appears to me to have been the most unaccountable, the most cruel, and the most unnecessary. In the infancy of the revolution it might, perhaps, have been prudent to guard the new establishments, by the excluding laws made in the reign of William the Third, and by the oaths imposed for the security of government.

But how it should have become necessary, or how it can be justified, that forty years after the revolution, in the year 1727, when the crown of these kingdoms was firmly fixed on the head of the Hanover family, when the Protestant establishments were guarded and secured, when the Catholics had given forty years test of their obedience and submission to the new constitution; after a rebellion in England and Scotland, in the year 1715, when the Roman Catholics of Ireland had a fair opportunity, if they were disposed to disloyalty, to lift under the banners of the Pretender, and flock to the standard of rebellion. Ireland was the only part of the empire where disaffection or sedition did not

dare to rear its head ; yet after all the merits of this oppressed people, an act is made in the first of George the Second, to deprive them of the right of voting for representatives in Parliament, which they had enjoyed, uninterruptedly, from the revolution to that day.

An honourable gentleman [Dr. Duigenan] has said, they were prohibited from voting at a much earlier period by the acts of Queen Anne, which annexed oaths of allegiance and supremacy to their right of franchise. Give me leave to say, that observation furnishes an additional argument against the policy of the act of George the Second ; for if the oaths of allegiance and supremacy were universally taken by the Catholic voters, during the reign of Queen Anne and George the First, to qualify them to exercise their franchise, as it was well known it was the fact, their acquiescence and taking these oaths was the strongest test they could give of their attachment to the state, and should have entitled them to the confidence of the nation ; and therefore, it is clear they were not excluded from voting, nor was it intended they should be by those oaths, for it was well known, that the Catholics voted in the election of that very parliament of George the Second, which afterwards disfranchised them.

Sir, the history of this act has been attributed to the local policy of a particular county in Ireland, the county of Galway, and to the result of a contested election for that county, between the Lord Dunkellin of that day and some other person.

It was said that the Catholics having by their intent voted Lord Dunkellin out of the county of Galway, returned his opponent. Lord Dunkellin had influence enough with the minister of that day to introduce this clause, depriving the Catholics of their franchise, into the act of George the Second. Whether that fact is well founded or not is impossible for me, at this time, absolutely to determine ; but, I confess, I have great doubts of the authenticity of that rumour. Because, I find, upon looking into the history of that day, and particularly into the Lords Journals, in the tenth year of Queen Anne, that Michael the Lord Dunkellin of that day, was, on the fourth of October, 1711, called up by writ to the House of Lords ; in the life of his father John Earl of Clanricarde ; and sat as a peer in the House of Lords during the reigns of Queen Anne and George the First, and until his death ; and his son, the late earl, was but two years old in the year 1727, when the act of the first of George the Second passed ; so that it is manifest there was no Lord Dunkellin of that day capable of being a candidate for the county of Galway. This much, however, I could venture to affirm, that, if by any such improper exertion of influence, the Catholics were deprived of the right of franchise, it met the decided disapprobation of the present noble representative of that illustrious family. I could venture to assert, that

that noble marquis was the most warm and attached friend to the fair and reasonable claims of the Catholic body, and I am fully satisfied that if the personal presence of that noble lord was absolutely necessary for their emancipation, he would, though at the risk of his health and personal safety, come over to give them his warmest support.

Sir, an honourable gentleman, who spoke third in debate, [Dr. Duigenan] has attacked the civil principles of the Catholics; he has said, that they wished for political liberty and political power, in order that they might carry into effect the principles of Mr. Payne, and unite with the enemies of the constitution in establishing a republic, upon the French model. Sir, I must beg leave to say, that I think I know the principles and the feelings of the Roman Catholics, at least in that province, to which I am particularly attached, (Connaught) as well, if not a little better, than that honourable gentleman; I know that they are a brave, a generous, and a loyal people; they are attached by principle to a free and a mixed monarchy, and they detest republican and levelling doctrines; and I will take upon me to say, when they are embosomed in the body of the state, when they are restored to those rights of citizens, of which they have been so long and so unjustly deprived, they would shed the last drop of their blood in support of the throne and his Majesty's illustrious house, and in support of the present constitution. They knew well that Administration were always amicable to the Catholic cause, as far as the temper of parliament and the nation would admit; and I tell that gentleman and this House, that the Catholics are too wise and too loyal to be made the dupes of levellers or republicans; they know well, that if the enemies of the Government could make use of them as instruments to overturn the constitution, the Catholics themselves would soon be buried in its ruins. For these reasons, I shall give my most decided support to the present measure in its fullest extent. I confess I think it a liberal one, and look upon Catholic emancipation to be the harbinger of peace, union, content, and prosperity to Ireland.

Mr. OSBORNE. I most heartily concur in the motion, as far as the propositions contained in it go; but think that they do not go far enough. It is an absurd, gradual measure, to grant the elective and with-hold the representative franchise, since the electors are necessarily men of lower rank, fortune and information, than the representatives would be. To with-hold the representative franchise, is still holding out the principle of monopoly for self—against the general good.

Mr. MAXWELL reprobated Administration for their conduct throughout the whole business, for not consulting the inde-

pendant gentlemen of the country, but, in their place, governing by a cabinet of clerks.

Mr. CUFFE. I sincerely recommend coolness and temper to the House, and advise the Roman Catholics to accept whatever shall be granted with gratitude, as the most likely way of reaching their *ultimatum*.

Lord KINGSBOROUGH. I for one, Sir, am for permitting the bill to be brought in, but will not pledge myself to support it, as I am highly disgusted, and that with the justest reason, with the conduct of the Roman Catholics for the last two years.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH. I, Sir, am also for admitting the bill, but will not pledge myself to its support, unless the right honourable gentleman who proposed it, can assure me that the Roman Catholics will be finally satisfied with what is granted them.

Mr. Secretary HOBART. Sir, I believe from the nature of the concessions I have proposed, that they will satisfy every rational Catholic in the kingdom. I am sure they ought to do so, as they are all that can possibly be granted with safety to the Protestant establishment. I cannot say more on the subject, nor can I answer whether these concessions will completely satisfy all the Catholics. I cannot take upon me to answer for any description of men.

Mr. CONOLLY. I am ready to give up all the prejudices of my youth to secure peace to my country. I am ready to give up fortune, and even my life, for the same end.

Mr. ANTHONY DALY. Sir, the measures proposed have my entire and hearty approbation as far as they go; but however, I do not think they go far enough. Much greater privileges might be granted; indeed I can see no reason why any privilege or any right of any other subject should be withheld from them. Their long loyalty, and their long sufferings, justly entitle them now to every favour, and even every indulgence.

The question was then put, that leave be given to bring in a bill for the further relief of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, when it passed in the affirmative with two dissenting voices only.

Ordered, That the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Hobart, Right Honourable Sir Hercules Langrishe, the Attorney and So-

licitor General, and Mr. Prime Serjeant, do prepare; and bring in the said bill.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1793.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH moved for leave to bring in a bill to establish a militia; which, as nearly as circumstances would permit, he would wish to form on the same plan as that of England. The whole number of men he proposed to be 16,000; or, upon a rough estimate, 500 for each county in Ireland.—Leave given.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH presented a petition from John Pollock, Esq. and other inhabitants of the town of Newry, praying aid, and to be enabled to raise money on the tolls of the Newry canal, for the purpose of extending the same to the deep water in Rice's Bay.

The petition was very favourably received; and referred to a committee to report their opinion thereon.

Mr. KNOX rose to suggest the propriety of granting to the Roman Catholics, indulgences greater than those proposed in the bill moved by the Right Honourable Mr. Hobart.

Sir LAWRENCE PARSONS said, that from the very late sitting on Monday night last, and the exhausted state of the House upon that occasion, he did not think it reasonable to detain gentlemen to hear his sentiments upon the Roman Catholic question; but he desired to be considered as one not approving the right honourable gentleman's bill, which, in his opinion, by granting the elective franchise, went much farther than the safety of the Protestant establishment would warrant.

Mr. GRATTAN made some observations on the state of the country, as apparent in the public accounts. His remarks were followed by a motion "for an address to his Majesty, for the better securing a reform of Parliament, and for manifesting the loyalty of the people of Ireland." This motion he introduced with a speech of considerable length; the tendency of which was to shew, that while Parliament was giving Government an extraordinary supply, greater than ever this House had granted, and a great addition to the army, it ought at the same time, to secure to the people a reform of Parliament. He said, that from the want of such reform, Government had increased its expences, exclusive of all public or parliamentary grants, in

the course of seven years, over and above its own estimates, on the faith of which new taxes were granted, 163,000*l. per annum*. That the produce of the new taxes granted in the course of the last seven years, including the proportion of Irish subscription to the lottery, as stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, amounted to 280,000*l. per annum*. That, in the same period, the influence of the crown in the House of Commons had increased near thirty members; in order to judge of this system, it should be tried by the test of durability. Suppose it is persisted in; that is to say, suppose you every seven years increase your expences, as you have for the last; I say, in twenty, you will ruin your country; you will have increased your taxes near 1,000,000*l.* a year, which is equal to a debt of 20,000,000*l.* at five *per centum*; a sum nearly equal to one-third of what England contracted in the last German war. And you will have increased in the House of Commons, so as to make the number of place-men and pensioners amount to above 175, which is a House of Commons of place-men and pensioners; I say, such a situation must bring things to a crisis with the people; my wish is to prevent that crisis, by a timely redress.

If gentlemen examine the growth of expence in the two countries, they will find, to their shame, that the expences of Ireland, from 1769 to 1792, (the time when the trade of Parliament was established) have increased in proportion more than those of Great Britain, including the interest of her debt incurred in the American war; the Falkland Isle armament; the Dutch armament; the Spanish armament, and the Russian armament. To such an extravagance has the trade of Parliament proceeded in this country. I shall be told, your debt has diminished, but your expences, I mean the expences of Government, have increased in an incomparably greater proportion; and your taxes have also increased in a still greater proportion. And this is your peace establishment. To this a war establishment is now to be superadded.

It has been stated, that your revenues are deficient 153,000*l. per annum*, and your expences are to be increased 100,000*l. per annum*, for the further augmentation of the army; 100,000*l.* for a contingent encampment, and, perhaps, 50,000*l.* more for a militia. All these expences to be superadded to a peace establishment, already exceeding your revenues 153,000*l.* The minister proposes a lottery, two loans, a vote of credit, and some new taxes, a great army and a militia. It is a new and a serious proposition. I wish to give the Government every necessary support, and I wish to give the people every constitutional redress. I wish to pass such bills as may cut down the unnecessary and corrupt charges on your establishment. I repeat it, I wish to give Government every honourable support, and to reconcile the people by giving them every constitutional redress; and I consider the latter necessary to effectuate the former, because you are

to combat French principles by the superiority of your constitution, as well as the superiority of your arms. But, for the better understanding my principles, I refer you to an address which I shall now take the liberty to move; the reception it receives will be the test of our sincerity on the subject of reform.

“ That we see with just alarm the tranquillity of these realms in danger of being disturbed by the ambition of France, connected with the propagation of principles that lead to the subversion of peace and order.

“ That we feel a deep sorrow at the atrocious consequences of such criminal delusions, and an immediate interest in common with the throne, to defend the faith of treaties against violation, and the settled principles of Government against anarchy and plunder. The advantages we have derived under his Majesty's reign; his late gracious interposition, the passions and pride of his people, as well as their duty and interest attached in his royal person and dignity, have induced us to seize the first moments to assure his Majesty of our unalterable attachment to his royal house, and of the unanimous and cordial determination of his subjects of Ireland to stand ever by the throne, and to preserve at all times our connexion with Great Britain.

“ That we are now directing our attention to such measures, as may give his Majesty's Government, at this critical juncture, every necessary and honourable support; and that if for such an important object we now for a short time delay, among other business, the consideration of what we conceive to be the general and just wish of his Majesty's subjects, a more equal representation of the people, in the digesting of which much time may be required; we his Majesty's faithful commons most humbly request that his Majesty will be graciously pleased to continue the session even beyond the usual period if necessary, in order to give his faithful commons full time, this present session, to apply their faculties and industry to mature and compleat so important a business as a reform of Parliament, that by giving his Majesty's subjects, pursuant to the gracious recommendation from the throne, every reason to be satisfied, and by giving his Government every necessary strength; we may more effectually unite in support of the king and constitution.”

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER objected to the address, as combining subjects not naturally connected; and taking the subjects distinctly, however highly he approved of strong professions of attachment to his Majesty, yet he thought it would be much better for the House to manifest that attachment by cheerfully voting the supply, than by mere verbal professions. He could not see any necessity for postponing the business of reform; he was ready to go into it at that moment;

though he could not pledge himself to any thing specific on that head. If, at the usual time of concluding the session, it should be found too short to go through with the business, he thought it would be time enough to address the crown to prolong it beyond the usual period.

As to the accounts and the animadversions which the right honourable gentleman had made on them, he had not his papers now with him, and therefore was not perfectly prepared to answer on that subject. He would from recollection, however, state some facts, which might, perhaps, serve for the present. To shew that Government had not been so profuse since the year 1785, as the right honourable gentleman had stated, he stated the debt of the nation at that period and at present.

National debt at 1785	-	-	£. 2,181,000
Ditto at 1792	-	-	2,190,000
Encrease only	-	-	11,000

In the same manner he shewed the encrease of the civil establishment, within the same period, was not more than 17,000*l.* almost the whole of which he could account for by votes of that House, addresses, &c.

The taxes laid on since the year 1784, including the 140,000*l.* new taxes granted at that time for the purpose of equalizing, did not amount to more than 160,000*l.* of course there remained only 20,000*l.* to defray all the expences which the votes of the House, within that period, had induced on Government. He said, the idea of limiting the expence of a country in a progressive state to opulence; growing in manufactures, in agriculture and in commerce, was futile and impracticable. He enumerated what had been done by Government, for the last eight years, in promoting those great objects; by bounties, inland navigation, &c. and declared, that notwithstanding all this, he should neither have asked Parliament for loan nor tax, were it not for the unfortunate probability of a war, which made extraordinary expence necessary.

Sir WILLIAM GLEADOWE rose, to express his strongest disapprobation of the minister's design of again making a lottery a source of finance. He said, that it was a most shameful and ruinous mode; asserted that more mischief was done by lottery gambling last year, under the right honourable baronet's bill for regulating that business, than had ever been done before; complimented him on the efficacy of his bill in thus depraving the people, and attributed the mischievous consequences of it to the right honourable baronet's rejecting some clauses that had been proposed to him. As to the encrease of the army, &c. he highly approved of it, and would trust Government cheerfully

with whatever sum they might demand at present, hoping for a fair and honest account of its expenditure at a future day. Of the address proposed, he did not approve; he thought there was something lurking in the last paragraph which he did not like. He would therefore oppose it, as he would at all times oppose every thing which looked like a peevish proposition.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER asserted the honesty of his intentions, in the bill which the honourable member had censured so strongly; the measure was a measure of the House, rather than his; and as to the clauses which had been proposed, he adopted such as he thought likely to be beneficial.

Mr. JOHN BERESFORD was willing to agree in the foregoing part of the address, but not to the latter, which describes the attention of the House as confined to one point. He suggested an amendment, importing that the House wished to attend to every measure likely to promote tranquillity and content among the people.

Mr. MAXWELL professed himself incapable, at present, of deciding on a proposition of so much moment; conceived it to be unusual to bring forward a matter of that kind without previous notice, and requested the right honourable gentleman who made the proposition, would defer the consideration of it for a few days.

Mr. GRATTAN immediately agreed to this; and after having moved that the order of the day for going into a committee, on the state of the representation, should be postponed to Monday next, gave notice that on that day he would move an address similar to that which had been read. From the temper of the House, and the exhausted state of gentlemen after the fatigue of yesterday, he believed they were not very willing to hear him in reply, to what had fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the public accounts; he desired, therefore, it might be understood, that, though he did not now say more on that subject, he by no means agreed in his positions, and would reserve himself to combat the right honourable baronet's arguments at a future day.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL, after stating to the House, that considerable quantities of gun-powder and fire-arms had been clandestinely imported, and seized as they were secretly conveying to the interior parts of the kingdom; he observed that this fact and the disturbed state of some of the northern counties, gave just reason to fear that some evil designs might be entertained; Government, he thought, ought to be enabled to counteract

these. He, therefore, moved for leave to bring in a bill, to prevent the exportation of gun-powder and fire-arms, without a licence from the chief governor, and also to prevent the keeping of gun-powder, above a certain quantity, without licence.

Leave was given; upon which the Attorney General presented the bill, which was immediately read a first time.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1793.

The House having resolved itself into a committee of supply,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, the augmentation of the army he intended now to move, was five thousand men. The encrease was large, but by making a strong exertion of this kind, the House might prevent the necessity of using those troops.

Mr. GRATTAN wished to know, precisely, what the object of the augmentation was? If they were destined to assist Great Britain in a French war, he could not understand how the raising of five thousand men would be likely to prevent that want; the object of the augmentation then must be to guard against domestic insurrection. Perhaps they were necessary; he did not deny but they might; but he thought the House ought to be informed for what purpose they were intended. By this augmentation, and the proposed militia, the Irish forces will amount to thirty-three thousand men. Would the minister come forward and say, that such a force was necessary; for his part he wished to be satisfied in this point, though he was willing to grant Government every necessary power, to enable them to enforce the due execution of the law, and to prevent the spreading of dangerous principles.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that the force was destined for the defence of the country generally; as well to repel foreign invasion, as to repress domestic insurrection, if necessary. He hoped that for the latter purpose they would not be needed, and were it not for the impending war, he should not think the additional force necessary for the preservation of internal quiet.

Mr. HOBART thought it his duty to say, that Government had the best reasons to believe that such a number of troops were at this time necessary, though the peculiar circumstances which induced them to think so, he could not with propriety lay before

the House. If gentlemen were of a different opinion, the responsibility of the refusal would rest with them.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that from what the two right honourable gentlemen had said, he collected that the augmentation was designed for preserving the country from foreign foes, as well as to prevent those internal commotions which a foreign war might, perhaps, render the more likely to occur. He professed himself afraid of the measure. The force moved for was almost unprecedented in this country; however he would, in the choice of dangers, vote for the augmentation. At the same time he was conscious that in voting for an army so great, as might possibly make Administration less attentive to the desires of the people, and prompt them to frustrate the reasonable expectations they had formed of a reform in the representation, and of those other measures on which the public mind was fixed, he and other gentlemen should incur much obloquy. It was in reliance on the candour of gentlemen, that they would give every necessary redress to the public complaints that he agreed to the augmentation. He warned them against the fallacious hope, that the force which they now received would enable them to despise the public wish; Ireland would not be coerced by such a force. The seditions, in Ireland, probably would and ought to be restrained by it, but the whole Irish nation never would. He concluded by observing, that the most effectual way of combating French principles in this country, was not by arms, but by giving to Ireland all the advantages of a British constitution—by shewing the superiority of the principles of that constitution over those of foreign phrensy.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE thought the augmentation too small: not a petty prince in Germany, he said, that did not furnish a greater quota of troops to the empire than the force now proposed. He suggested the propriety of voting ten thousand men, and in a long speech spoke to the propriety of the measure.

Mr. FORBES declared his readiness to vote for the augmentations, but would not have it understood that he approved of the policy of the French war, which made them necessary. If those people were suffered to contend with each other, the inherent vices of what they thought proper to call their form of government, would in a few months reduce them into a situation, into which it was the object of the war to bring them. He hoped, however that, like a generous friend, Ireland would be prompt to assist Great Britain, without enquiring into the causes of her difficulties. The reason given by the minister why this augmentation was necessary, to his mind was not satisfactory; he could

not see the necessity there now was for seventeen thousand men within the kingdom, when, during the most dangerous periods of the late war, there were not six thousand troops in Ireland. He confessed he was much alarmed at the idea of seventeen thousand men, standing army, added to sixteen thousand militia existing in Ireland. It was a situation in which this country never had been, and in which even England had never been, but in the midst of a war.

Mr. PONSONBY wished that a more satisfactory answer could have been given, as to the destination of those troops. By the proposed augmentation of five thousand, the troops on the establishment, including the three thousand kept abroad for the service of the empire, would amount to twenty thousand men, which with thirty-six thousand troops on Irish pay—an army, which notwithstanding what a right honourable baronet had said, was greater than any German prince ever paid or was able to pay. It was a monstrous military force to be at the disposal of the crown, and alarmed him very much; what was the pretence for this force? Were we, he asked, to engage in a land-war with France? Those who should adopt such a mode, would find they had erred very much. He confessed he did not much approve of the combination of powers, which had been formed against France. If no such combination had been formed, and if the people had been left entirely to themselves, their immorality would, of itself, have made them cut each others throats long since. Nothing, he said, but the pressure of external force kept them together; as to any increased augmentation he would oppose it with all his might. In that now proposed, however, he would concur, though he thought nothing but the strongest attachment to the House could induce them to go so far.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH, Mr. EGAN, Hon. DENIS BROWNE, Mr. MAXWELL, and Mr. GRAYDON spoke each for a short time; all concurring in the necessity of the augmentation.

The committee then agreed in the resolution, "That twelve thousand men are necessary for the defence of this country;" and also, "that in the present situation of the country, it is expedient to raise three thousand men additional."

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1793.

Mr. VANDELEUR moved, that the proper officer do lay before the House, an account of the expences of the building the New Custom-house, from the commencement; together with an ac-

count of the expences of furnishing the several apartments therein. Ordered accordingly.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a petition from the corporation of the city of Dublin, praying compensation for the injury they have sustained, in the loss of ferryage, by the building of the new bridge; which, after a short observation from the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was referred to a committee; and counsel are to be heard before the committee, on the part of the petitioners, in support of the allegation of their petition.

He also presented a petition from the church-wardens and inhabitants of the parish of St. Audeon; and likewise a petition from the church-wardens and inhabitants of the parish of St. Michan, praying for a repeal of the police law, so far as it affects the city of Dublin. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. MASON brought up the report from the committee of supply. The report was read, and agreed to by the House.

Went into committee on the bill to prevent the importation of arms and gun-powder into this kingdom, and the removing of arms and gun-powder without license; Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD in the chair.

Mr. GRAYDON was against entrusting revenue officers with the power of search. The civil magistrates ought to be entrusted with that power.

Mr. MAXWELL agreed to the expediency of the measure, but wished it to be properly understood.

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL and Hon. DENIS BROWNE supported the measure as indisputably necessary.

Lord EDWARD FITZGERALD declared, that the clause imposing penalties on the removal of arms from one place to another, was an infringement on the liberty of the subject. He was informed by gentlemen of administration that the defenders were now in arms.

In case of an attack upon his House, would he not be allowed arms, without license, for its defence? Must volunteers apply for a license to the Lord Lieutenant, his Secretary, or the Commissioners of the Revenue, as the bill requires, as often as they wish to go through their evolutions? He, therefore, voted against this clause particularly, and considered the entire bill as a penal one.

Mr. JOHN O'NEIL gave it his hearty concurrence, as he did not see how it tended to affect volunteers.

Mr. GRATTAN objected, particularly, to that clause which empowered revenue officers to search baggage, &c. for concealed arms. He also thought that some explanatory, as well as mitigating clauses should be inserted.

Mr. BERESFORD reported progress; and the House adjourned.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1793.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a petition from the inhabitants of St. Michael's parish, praying the abolition of the police, and the establishment of a watch, under the control of the magistrates, &c. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD presented the report of the committee, to which the petition of the bakers of the city of Dublin, praying an additional allowance, &c. was referred to a committee of the whole House.

Mr. Secretary HOBART communicated to the House, that his Excellency having, this day, received information that an embargo had been laid in Great Britain on all ships of France, or bound thither from any of the ports of that kingdom; had thought proper to lay on a similar embargo here. He moved for leave to bring in a bill to indemnify the persons concerned in laying on said embargo. The reason of the embargo being laid on in England, he said, was, that France had laid an embargo on all the English, Russian, and Dutch ships in her harbours.

The House then resolved into a committee of ways and means.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER mentioned to the House, the taxes which he proposed laying on:

The first was, a duty of 4s. per head on all live cattle exported; the present duty was only one shilling per head, though there was a certain profit of two pounds sterling to the exporter on every head.

He proposed also that live hogs exported, on which the duty now was but three farthings, should pay one shilling. The amount of these he estimated } 4000l.
at

This tax, he observed, would be favourable to agriculture; at the same time it was not so high as to make it at all likely to prevent the exportation of live stock, which he would think highly improper to do, considering that there was in this country a great quantity of land, unfit for any other use than pasturage.

The next tax would be on carpeting.

The duty on that article now by the yard was 2*d*. but whole carpets were rated by the piece. He proposed that instead of this, the duty on all carpets should be 2*d*. per square yard.

	£.	s.	d.
He would raise the tax on carriages imported, with two wheels, from 4 <i>l</i> . to - - - - -	8	0	0

And he would raise the tax on four wheel carriages, from 6 <i>l</i> . to - - - - -	12	0	0
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On bees wax he would raise the duty from 2 <i>l</i> . per cent. to - - - - -	10	0	0
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The exemption which spermaceti at present enjoyed he would take away, and tax it at the rate of 20 <i>s</i> . per cent. The produce of this he estimated at - - - - -	400	0	0
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Cyder now pays 6 <i>s</i> . 4 <i>d</i> . per ton; he proposed to raise it to - - - - -	1	0	0
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This also would produce - - - - -	400	0	0
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On white lead he would raise the duty of 3 <i>s</i> . 9½ <i>d</i> . per cent. to - - - - -	0	5	0
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Slates at present were all liable to the same duty; though some slates were worth 10 <i>s</i> . per thousand, while others were worth 3 <i>l</i> . he proposed that they should in future be taxed - - - - -	<i>ad valorem</i>		
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Timber, he stated as worth 40*s*. or 50*s*. per ton, and paying now only 2*s*. per ton duty; this he thought too low, and proposed raising it to 3*s*. and 6*d*. on timber imported into Dublin; and to 4*s*. on timber imported into other ports of the kingdom. The reason of the lower duty in Dublin is, that timber imported already pays 6*d*. per ton to the Ballast Office.

On quack medicines he would also lay a tax on importation, equal to the duty drawn back in England on exportation.

The remainder of the taxes are additional stamp duties:

Declarations and applications, now, pay 2 <i>d</i> . stamp duty; he proposed - - - - -	0	0	6
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Bills and answers, now paying 1 <i>d.</i> he would raise	£.	s.	d.
to	0	0	2
On marriage licenses	0	2	6

Besides several other less important articles,

He also meant to propose a rising of the carriage duty from 20*s.* to one guinea per wheel, on four-wheeled carriages; and from 5*s.* to 5*s.* 5*d.* on two-wheeled carriages.

The gross amount of all which taxes he stated at, } 10,000*l.*
per annum, about

He concluded by declaring, that, if further duties should hereafter become necessary, they must be such as will be felt; such as, perhaps, will interfere with our manufactures.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY thought the taxes proposed were fair and moderate; but he had one objection to the whole of them; which was, that they were raised on the consumption. This, he thought, was the worst of all possible ways of laying taxes; for the public thus paid five times, frequently ten times, more than ever comes into the treasury, inasmuch as every hand through which the article passes before it comes to be consumed, charges a separate additional profit, in proportion to the duty. He would advise the right honourable gentleman, when he should next have occasion to propose taxes, to adopt such as would not be liable to this objection, as a house-tax, or window-tax; these might be more disagreeable, as not being disguised, but they would take less money from the pockets of the people.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER agreed with the honourable gentleman, that the species of tax mentioned, would take less money from the pockets of the people; but they would not be paid with so much cheerfulness. The people, he said, would think he was mocking them, if, at the moment that he took the tax off hearths to ease the poor, he should lay it on their houses; when, however, he should have occasion to come to Parliament again for taxes, he would remember the principle of taxation the honourable gentleman had hinted, and would hope for his support in carrying it into effect.

Mr. GRAYDON was of opinion that the tax on live cattle exported was very exceptionable. A number of very unreasonable prejudices had gone abroad on this subject, which appeared to have suggested to the right honourable baronet the idea of this duty. He recommended it to the right honourable baronet to

consider the subject again. His arguments against it he would reserve till the tax should be moved.

Mr. CUFFE also disapproved of this tax. He said, if it were adopted, it would nearly ruin two whole counties in his part of the country; the inhabitants of which had scarcely any other means of support than exportation of this kind.

Mr. VANDELEUR expressed his disapprobation of the tax.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH supported it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER defended the duty. He said it would not prevent the exportation of a single head of cattle; and he could see no reason, when the duties on the hide, hair, offals, &c. of cattle slaughtered at home amount to 5s. per head, why they should be exported for 1s. a head. If gentlemen would compare the price of meat here and in England, they would find how well able the exporter of live cattle to that country is able to pay the proposed duty. There was another reason why he approved the tax—it fell on landed property ultimately; this might be a reason for gentlemen in that House, considering only their private interest to oppose it; but it was a reason why they should support it, from a principle of public good; for the people would be more likely to submit to the burdens of the state, cheerfully, when the House adopted measures by which they themselves suffered in the first instance.

The PROVOST supported the tax.

Sir J. BLAQUIERE thought the tax on timber would impede the improvement of the country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER observed, that the two taxes proposed, were the only ones that would be certainly productive. No man, he said, would stop building on account of the very small encrease of price which the duty proposed would occasion. He was not wedded however to his own ideas; if any gentleman proposed other taxes as productive and less liable to objection, he would willingly adopt them.

Mr. BAGWELL suggested a tax on hounds and horses, instead of that on timber, as it was probable that article might rise to a very high price in consequence of the war, and it would be impolitic in that case to tax it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER agreed to the idea of its being impolitic to tax that article in case of a war; if, there-

fore, a war should take place, he would suspend the duty. He then moved all the taxes of last year, which were agreed to.

The House then resumed.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1793.

Mr. Godley's private bill from the Lords, was read a second time and committed.

Mr. MASON reported from the committee of ways and means, the several resolutions relative to the duties on postage of letters; which being agreed to, a bill was ordered in accordingly.

The Hon. Mr. PACKENHAM moved for leave to bring in a bill, for the encouragement of seamen and marines employed in the royal navy, by rendering the payment of wages due to deceased seamen and marines more easy; as also the remitting of wages due to those in actual service.

Leave being given, Mr. Packenham presented the bill, which was read a first time.

The House having again, pursuant to order, resolved into a committee of ways and means, made further progress.

The House then resumed.

A petition of the manufacturing hosiery of the city of Dublin, whose names were thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners have perceived with infinite concern the manufacture they are engaged in to be rapidly on the decline; which having investigated the cause of, they find principally to proceed from the want of water machinery to spin cotton yarn for hosiery use, not a single mill existing at present in Ireland for that purpose; that the wear of cotton stockings having of late become so universal makes this the principal branch of the hosiery business; that the cotton mills in England having attained the greatest degree of perfection in this line, enables the English hosiery to undersell petitioners in the article of cotton hose, even in their own market; that formerly petitioners imported cotton twist from Great Britain at a duty of near 2d. per pound and other heavy charges, but latterly from cotton yarn, which requires to be doubled or laid together for the hosiery use, being construed into a degree of manufacture, it has become subject to a duty of ten and a half per cent. which amounts on an average from six-pence to seven-pence per pound, totally precluding petitioners from importing it, and in conse-

quence, disables them from proceeding in their business, thereby encouraging immense importations of cotton hosiery, which must finally end in the destruction of that branch of industry in Ireland, and deprive of the means of support the petitioners and their numerous dependants; the petitioners, therefore, beg leave to submit their case to the consideration of the House, praying encouragement for the erecting of water machinery for spinning cotton yarn adapted for hosiery use, and in such other matters relative to the manufacture of cotton hosiery in this kingdom as the House shall deem most expedient.

Ordered, that the petition be referred to the consideration of a committee, which was accordingly appointed.

The House, then pursuant to order, resolved itself into a committee, to inquire into the state of the representation of the people in Parliament; Sir MICHAEL CROMIE in the chair.

Mr. GRATTAN said, I will not say that this is the most important subject that was ever agitated in this House—I do remember, in 1782, another subject of equal, if not superior, moment. The question then was, whether Ireland should be governed by the Parliament of another country, and the present is, whether she shall enjoy a Parliament of her own? As the subject of parliamentary reform is now posted, 'tis impossible for Government to retreat from it. Their declarations the 4th day of the session—the words of the Lord Lieutenant's Secretary—the liberal grants of the House, have established the necessity of acceding to a reform in parliament, and have sealed the doom of every rotten borough in the kingdom; hence I collect two things; that Parliament should be reformed—that the reform must take place this session. Here let us appeal to gentlemen conversant with the disposition of the people; do not they think so? Are they not convinced of it—don't they know—have they not declared that their constituents do now expect a reform of parliament, and that it is a measure not more necessary for their freedom than their felicity? Having mentioned the state of the question, I will advert to the state of your representation—it is short: Of three hundred members, above two hundred are returned by individuals; from forty to fifty are returned by ten persons; several of your boroughs have no resident elector at all, some of them have but one; and, on the whole, two-thirds of the representatives in the House of Commons are returned by less than one hundred persons! This is not that antient, that venerable constitution of King, Lords, and Commons. It is not even an aristocracy. It is an oligarchy. It is not an oligarchy of property, but of accident; not of prescription, but of innovation. Here again I appeal to the conscious conviction of every man who hears me; and I assert two propositions, which can neither be denied

nor defended: First, that the majority of the representatives are chosen by individuals; second, that a great proportion of them are afterward endowed by the crown. And it follows, that, in our present state of representation, the House of Commons cannot be supposed to be the organ of the people.

In defence of such a state, three arguments are advanced; First, its antiquity—antiquity! an establishment you would imagine that took place in Saxon times, in the age of the Confessor, or after the English intercourse with Ireland, at the time of the charter of John or the reign of Edward—No! James the First, was the King who made above forty of those private boroughs. In the year 1613, the numbers returned to parliament were two hundred and thirty-two; since which time sixty-eight members have been added, all by the house of Stuart; one by Anne, four by James the Second; most of the remainder by Charles the First, with a view to religious distinctions, and by Charles the Second, with a view to personal favour. If you look to antiquity, therefore, the boroughs stand on bad ground. The form of your constitution was twelve counties, established in the reign of King John. Henry the Eighth, added one; Mary, two; and Elizabeth, seventeen. Since which time your counties received no addition whatsoever, though between the year 1613 and the present, the borough interest has received an addition of sixty-eight members; which is more than double the whole of the county representation.

The great division on this subject is cities or boroughs, where the grant was to burgesses and freemen indefinite; or to a limited number of burgesses, seldom exceeding twelve, in whom the right of election was confined. The former are boroughs intended to be free, and the latter intended to be otherwise. The number of the former, I apprehend to be above forty, and where they have become what we understand to be intended by the word "close boroughs" they have departed from the intention of the grant, and ought pursuant to the meaning of that grant to be opened. The other class, which I apprehend to be above forty, are in their origin vicious—it is a monopoly—like any of the other monopolies of James I.—a grant in its nature criminal. Most of the forty boroughs, created by James II. were so. It appears from the grants themselves, that they were intended to be private property: they were granted as a personal reward for doing some specified transaction. Such a grant could stand, I apprehend, on no principle whatsoever. These with those made by Charles the First, became a subject of complaint; they were most of them made on the eve of calling a Parliament, and some of them not sealed till after the writs of summons had issued, and were so loudly complained of that Charles the First had promised to submit a plan to the consideration of Parliament. Thus are these two descriptions of boroughs; the one intended to be free by the grant,

and rendered close by the proprietor; the other intended to be close by the grant, and rendered vicious by the principles of the law. The first set of boroughs are liable to be questioned for departing from their original purpose, and the last for adhering to it.

Let us compare the state of these boroughs with the principles of the constitution. The principles of the constitution are sacred, its organization accidental. Are these defensible on the ground of population or property, or population and property mixed? Population is out of the case; and as to property, we will suppose two hundred members returned by one hundred individuals; what property do the former represent. Suppose the property of these individuals is 4,000*l.* per annum; they represent 400,000*l.* and vote near 2,000,000*l.* taxes on the people. They are two-thirds of the House voting near 2,000,000*l.* and not representing half a million. But if you add what is received back again in place or pension, you will find it comes nearly to this—that the majority tax others and not their constituents. Take it in a stronger light; it is well known that near forty persons are returned by about ten individuals, somewhat more than the sixth of the House of Commons, representing that quantity of property and population. By the old constitution, the constituents paid their representatives—try the present state of representation by that test.

Could the one hundred individuals pay the two hundred members? Could the ten individuals pay the forty members? So far from any right on the principle of property to send so many members to Parliament to pay the state, they could not pay the members. The argument, therefore, can stand no examination; neither the test of property, nor population, nor antiquity of these boroughs have been established by accident, by humour, by ignorance, and by favour, without any regard to property, population, or any one principle of constitution. The second argument in their favour is, that they have worked well; that the constitution has flourished under rotten boroughs. I beg to consider the operations of the constitution on the public welfare and on private property.

As to public welfare, I acknowledge many beneficial acts, wholesome regulations, and one great revolution, but may I be suffered to think that the redemption of this country had been more speedily established, the good of this country more uniformly pursued, and with less intervals of inconsistency, if Parliament had been constituted more according to the principles of the constitution. As it is constituted, to me its ordinary operation appears defective, its raptures successful, and its relapses disgraceful.

You have certain committees—committees of courts of justice; have they acted? Committees of trade; have they acted? What was the case of the East India trade? Committers of griev-

ances; have they acted? It appears to me that the functions of the House of Commons would be discharged with more benefit to the public, and more honour to itself, under a constitution by representation, than a constitution by boroughs. I have had opportunities to speak to the growth of the expences of Government. I have shewn, without the probability of contradiction, that in seven years you have, in those expences alone, exceeded your estimates in the sum of 163,000*l.* I did not form my comparison with the actual expence of 1784; if I had, the excess had been greater, particularly with regard to the civil establishments, which was, in the year 1784, 174,000*l.* and the excess therefore 33,000*l.* not 17,000*l.* as the right honourable gentleman was pleased to mention. But I mentioned a progress of expence still more striking, that since the year 1769, you have encreased your annual charge, including debt, more in proportion than Great Britain, notwithstanding the American war, and all her armaments. But the evil effects on private fortunes of this species of representation are more sensibly felt, and more readily understood; those who have contested boroughs, those who have repeatedly obtained seats in this House for boroughs, may find in their mortgages an answer to the admirers of the present system. I may aver, without fear of contradiction, that the expences of election and returns to Parliament are so ruinous, that no private fortune can support them; that the expence for obtaining returns for a borough, except under the gift of a patron, are so great, as no private fortune can sustain; that these expences encrease with the powers of the constitution. I have heard that seats in this House, forty years ago, were obtained for 600*l.* I have heard they now cost 3000*l.* and you know these expences are ultimately paid by the public. Hence arises what we often lamented, the trade of Parliament, a trade in which the dealer does not make 6*l.* per cent. by his money, with all the other sacrifices of honour, &c. I wish to lay the axe at the root of this trade, in which the political morality, as well as the freedom of the country, are intimately concerned. I shall be told there are exceptions to this expence; I feel it; but I feel also that the expence is the rule and the saving an exception. The property of boroughs, the sale of boroughs, the sale of honours, sale of votes, private embarrassments, and public servility; all will be corrected by the reform of parliament and the constitution under its defective state, so far from working as well as gentlemen have flattered themselves, has been attended with a growth of public expence, equalled only by an accumulation of private difficulties. The third argument in support of the present system is, that gentlemen cannot agree about a better. We agree in what we condemn; we cannot well differ in the principle on which we are to reform. We agree, I apprehend, that twelve burgesses should not return two members to serve in Parliament. That is, we agree in the destruction of close boroughs. We agree on

the principle which is to conduct your compasses, a mass of propertied people—the precise number only be a subject of discussion; but we agree that we are to look to a mass of people having property. How far we are to go, and what geographical line, whether the circle of a county, or any lesser circumscription, may be a subject of discussion, but not of discord.

We cannot differ about the propriety of residence—of extending the right of franchise to freemen by birth, marriage, or the exercise of a trade for a certain time. Perhaps we shall not differ on the propriety of extending the right of voting to landholders for years, having a certain valuable interest—an universal registry—elections to be limited in time, and to be carried on in different places at once; an oath to be taken by the candidate, and to be repeated at your bar, by the member:

“That he has not been at any expence whatsoever, nor paid any sum whatsoever, to procure his return, by himself or others.”

These, with some other regulations, when added to an internal reform, which should exclude officers of the revenue, and a long, &c. which my friend will explain, and which will reduce the influence by excluding all pensioners for years, and placemen, except such as are in higher departments; shew, I think, that the subject, however it may have been supposed to be involved in difficulties, yet contains the principles of concord.

These broad principles carried into execution, must insure you that constitution, temperate at once and pure, founded on the true principles of property, with population, including what is well understood by the words, “constitutional public,” giving to every farmer a sort of station in his country; and to every landlord an interest to give an encouraging lease. Thus, the reform of Parliament may be a good system of agriculture, as well as of liberty. These principles, I say, carried into execution, may produce that steady calm in the minds of men, which results from the sense of a good constitution, and the benefits of an honest representation.

Mr. Grattan then read three resolutions, and moved the first;

“Resolved, That the representation of the people is attended with great and heavy charges and payments, in consequence of elections and returns of members to serve in Parliament, and that said abuses ought to be abolished.

“Resolved, That of the three hundred members elected to serve in Parliament, the counties, and counties of cities, and towns, together with the university, return eighty-four members, and that the remaining two hundred and sixteen, are returned by boroughs and manors.

“Resolved, That the state of the representation of the people in Parliament requires amendment.”

The resolution was opposed by the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, who objected to it on account of the danger of teaching the public to despise the present system before a better one was provided. The House ought not to decide thus on the great object of their enquiry before they had made any enquiry at all: and before they had a remedy provided to apply to the evil. If they adopted such a resolution, they would degrade the Parliament, and would their laws then, he asked, be cheerfully obeyed? He would not be understood by this to oppose a parliamentary reform; but he would not pledge himself to support he knew not what. He thought it was not necessary to degrade Parliament in order to correct it. It had frequently amended itself, but never had adopted such a preparatory resolution as this. He quoted the octennial bill, and that for determining on contested elections by trial of jury, as instances where Parliament had corrected itself without degrading its character. He exhorted gentlemen to imitate this example now, and to introduce any plan they had of reform, without passing this resolution.

Under the present state of the representation, the prosperity of the country had increased as much as it could have done under any other representation whatsoever; and as to liberty, the English acts which were adopted at and since 1782, shewed that the Irish Parliament was as well inclined to the people in that respect, as any parliament could be in whatsoever manner they might be chosen. Before gentlemen meddled with the defects of the Parliament, he would advise them to do justice to its acts. If Parliament were degraded by this resolution, whatever plan of reform they might afterwards adopt, would not be respected; it would only create new demands and new embarrassments. By all this, he did not mean to oppose a parliamentary reform; but to prevent premature and unnecessary decision. The wise way would be to produce a system of reform; by it to remove the existing defects, not to libel them. He cautioned gentlemen of appealing from that House to the public; and finally moved, as an amendment, the following:—

“Resolved, That under the present system of representation, the privileges of the people, the trade, and the prosperity of the country, have greatly increased, and that if any plan be produced likely to increase those advantages, and not hazard what we already possess, it ought to be taken into the most serious consideration.”

Mr. FORBES objected to the amendment, as it was perfectly unparliamentary to move as an amendment what went entirely to supersede the original motion.

The Hon. M. STEWART, in a very able speech, reprobated that kind of little special pleading, by which the Administration en-

deavoured to get rid of every great constitutional question. Parliament, he said, would not at all be injured by the adoption of his right honourable friend's motion, for both in the House and out of it, in this country and in England, the fact was known, that a reformation was necessary. He defended the resolution, and also the two others which were to follow it, very happily; declared it was not from a love of theoretic perfection that he was a friend to reform, but because he saw that, under the present system, the great ends of representation were not answered; for the public voice did not operate finally and with effect on the representative assembly. The present borough system prevented the people from having any tie or influence over the representatives; it also prevented the Crown from having a power of appeal to the people, and thus subjugated it to the will of an aristocratic combination. A reform was much less necessary in England than here, for the constitution of Ireland was much worse than that of England.

He then threw out an idea of reform, which had occurred to him recently, and which therefore was not matured. It was that of giving to the county electors the power of returning all the members now returned within the county for boroughs; allowing, however, to each elector a voice only for one member. He was against an internal reform of Parliament without an external one; for such a reform would only subjugate the country to the borough monopolists, and he would much rather have the power placed in the Crown than in them. He advised ministers to meet this subject fairly and freely; for the reform of Parliament founded as it was in reason and justice, would ultimately establish itself.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE said, he conceived the resolutions of the right honourable gentleman went to a statement that the representation of the people was imperfect, and ought to be amended; that he agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that it was imperfect; that he knew no human institution that was otherwise; that from the lowest republic to the highest monarchical system, there was and must be imperfection; that to suppose such an institution to be pure and faultless, was to suppose mankind without vices, passions, or prejudices; that the representation might be amended, he had no doubt; but at what time were Parliament called on to discredit themselves, and to admit that they were not the real representation of the people? at the time that justice and policy unite in calling for a law to restore to the Catholic body the great bulk of the people, the rights of the constitution; at the time that a slow and creeping ferment prevails in three counties adjoining your metropolis—that is communicating its effects to other parts of the kingdom at the time you are going to engage in a perilous war, and to vote the treasure and

blood of your country to its support! Is that an expedient time for such a declaration? Is any time expedient for destroying the credit of an establishment that preserves for you any thing like order, at which time not one man is prepared to say he had any plan that others would agree to, or that he had heard any plan from others that he could agree to?

A right honourable gentleman had complained of the encreased expences of the Government from the year 1769, and inferred that this proceeded from the profligacy of Government and of Parliaments. It had another source—the internal expences of the country, the public buildings, public works, and public bounties. He had advised a minister of this country that he had connection with, to restrain those expences, and only allow them from exceedings, if any there were, of revenue. He had told that minister, that if he acted this part, he might defy Parliamentary opposition; that it would not be listened to, or supported by the country; that without that support it was nugatory. He was sorry he had not been attended to. A right honourable gentleman [Secretary of State] had said, that adopting any resolution approving of Parliamentary proceedings at this time would not meet the sense of the resolution which went to enquire into the state of the representation. Did he mean to say, that it was a committee constituted to find fault with the representation, to enquire merely where it was defective—and not to state its benefits. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman, that the defects in the English representation were defects arising from decay and from time; that the imperfections of Irish representation were of another nature—that it was a defect affixed by power to it, but that still the effects were the same in both countries of the popular voice, and of right in England; it determined every thing in Ireland, every thing material; the situation of all European nations was critical, that of Ireland more particularly so than any other; we have all the risks of other countries; we have risks peculiar to ourselves. Do not let gentlemen think concession the only method of quieting the public mind; timidity is not the way of safety, it is the way of danger: and if the legislative body is to be governed and directed by every breath of discontent that it hears, there is an end of you; your properties, your life, and your liberties will be buried in a heap of anarchy, speculation, and confusion. The honourable gentleman who spoke last said, the obstruction to reform would be only the interested principle that gentlemen might have in its formation, that if every man would divest himself of such a motive, that it would be easy; and I think with him that in such case it would be much more practicable than it is; but unfortunately, that is little to be hoped for till he could alter human nature. He would not divest it of interested feeling; that it was the same out of Parliament as in Parliament; and that in his mind that practical conviction weighed against every

speculation, grounded on the principle the honourable gentleman wished for. He said he was no member for a borough, never would be member for a borough; that his being a member of Parliament at all depended on the will of a great county, at whose decision on that point, whatever it might be, he should not repine, but that he never would cry down, or join in crying down, the legislative authority of the kingdom, until some other rational authority was ready to be substituted in its room.

The SECRETARY OF STATE (the Provost) said, he was not in the House when this resolution passed for inquiring, in a committee of the whole House, into the state of the representation. He understood that right honourable gentlemen in high offices had stood forward on that occasion, and declared themselves friends to a reform in the representation of the people, and that the order, as it now stood, was an amendment moved by an honourable gentleman in a considerable office under Government; he thought, therefore, that the gentlemen at the other side of the House were not entitled to the whole credit of this measure, but that those with whom he usually acted, were to have their share in it, and were bound to give it every proper support. It was not now the question, whether it was wise to agitate the public mind by the investigation of this subject that had been already determined. The House had resolved on the inquiry, and had he been present, he would have been induced, from the present state of this country, and from the example of so many gentlemen in high offices under Government, to have agreed to it, having thought it wise to enter into this subject in so solemn a manner; we ought to consider it with the utmost caution and deliberation, and draw no conclusion without first stating the premises on which it was founded. To the resolution respecting the injurious consequences to individuals and the public, occasioned by the expences of elections, he saw no objection: The fact was acknowledged, and he thought a proper election bill would be a good step to a reform in the representation; the other resolution, as to the number of representatives returned from counties, and from great cities and great towns, was a truth, and he saw no objection to their solving it; but to resolve that the representation required amendment, without hearing any evidence, or stating any facts, was to determine without inquiry, and was contrary to the express words of the order under which the House had gone into a committee. He believed the fact to be true, but that was not enough on a subject of so much importance; the statement of the facts would give the greatest weight to any plan of reform that may be thought practicable. The representation of Ireland had been compared to that of Great Britain, but he thought most unjustly; the latter could be traced in the time of Britons, Saxons and Normans, though various tenures, ancient usages, immemorial

prescriptions, several great charters, and many acts of the legislature, from the earliest periods of the history of the kingdom, to the act of union. He confessed, that in several instances boroughs has been incorporated there by royal charters, but observed, that as to the legality of this prerogative, different opinions had been entertained by authors of great character. The last exertion of this prerogative was in the creation of the borough of Newark, by Charles the Second; and though in the year 1676, the English House of Commons determined to receive the members, yet the opposition to it was so strong, and the minority so considerable, that this was the last attempt made to exercise the prerogative in that manner; but what was the history of the representation in this country? He could inform gentlemen with some accuracy, having thought it his duty when he took a more active part in public business, to extract from all the borough charters at the Rolls Office their material contents. The number of representatives in the thirty-fourth year of Henry the Eighth was one hundred; to this number Mary and Elizabeth added about forty-eight, but of these there were nineteen counties, of which Elizabeth had established seventeen, a mode of representation worthy the character of that great princess. In the first parliament of James the First, held in 1613, the members of the House of Commons were two hundred and thirty-two; the last creation of a borough was by Queen Anne, who created one only. For the difference between the number of representatives at the accession of James and the present number of three hundred, the House of Stuart is responsible. One half of the representatives were made by them, and made by the exertion of prerogative; of those James made forty at one stroke, most of them at the eve of a parliament, and some after the writs of summons had issued. The Commons in that Parliament expressed their doubts whether those boroughs had the power of returning members to sit in Parliament, and reserved that subject for future consideration. Complaints were made to James of those grants, but what was his answer? "I have made forty boroughs; suppose I had made four hundred—the more the merrier." Charles the First followed the example of his father in exercising this prerogative, but not to so great an extent: Complaints were also made to him, and he gave assurances that the new corporations should be reviewed by Parliament. The grants made by these two monarchs appear, by the histories and correspondences of those times, to have been for the purpose of giving the Protestants a majority over the Roman Catholics. The grants by Charles II. James II. and Queen Anne, proceeded from motives of personal favour; thus it would appear, if the facts were investigated, that one half of the representation of Ireland had arisen from the exertions of prerogative, influenced by occasional motives, disputes among religionists, and inducements of personal fa-

your, but had not been derived from any of those sources which had produced the English constitution. Had he the honour of being a member of the British House of Commons, he would never touch the venerable fabric of their representation; but in this kingdom, the part of the representation universally complained of, had originated in private or party motives, and he did not believe there was one prescriptive borough in the whole kingdom. He believed some boroughs were called so, but he believed unjustly; eleven of the grants which had been mentioned did not appear at the Rolls Office, but most of these were modern in the time of the House of Stuart. It was the duty, he thought, of the committee, to inquire what was become of those charters, and to investigate the titles of those places to send members to Parliament; the statement of those facts would give great weight to any opinions that may be formed on the subject of improving the representations. He thought it just that the House should be fully acquainted with all those facts upon which they were to form an opinion on the subject of such general importance; such a statement would tend to support those opinions, and to shew the propriety of interposing on a subject where nothing but the most evident necessity could warrant any interposition at all, and he could speak from knowledge in saying, that the necessary information may be obtained in a few days. He acknowledged the truth of the proposition made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the representatives of the people had, in many instances of great public utility performed the trusts reposed in them, in a manner most honourable to themselves, and useful to the community. He gave them great credit for the limitation of Parliaments, the relief to their Roman Catholic fellow subjects, as to their property in lands for our free trade and independent legislature; and said he should cheerfully join the right honourable gentleman in any resolutions of that nature, if proposed in the House of Commons, or in a committee, appointed for that purpose; but he could not vote for such a resolution now, because the business of this committee was to inquire into the state of the representation of the people, and not to consider in what manner their representatives had conducted themselves, or what advantages the public had derived from their conduct; nor was it the business of that committee to say in what manner they would conduct themselves if any useful plan should be proposed; it ought to be presumed that they would do their duty without any assurance of their resolution to do so. He could not, therefore, agree to the amendment proposed, which he feared might be considered as avoiding the object of the inquiry, though, from his knowledge of the right honourable mover, he was ready to suppose that he had no such intention. He said, that the events which had been mentioned, and which were so honour-

able to the representatives of the people, furnished an additional reason to shew that this committee should be careful in reporting facts before they proposed opinions in those great national acquisitions which had been mentioned; the members of Parliament were united in one common cause with the people; the limitation of Parliaments particularly increased the power of the proprietors of boroughs, and free legislature and free trade tended to increase both their power and property; an equal representation struck at the root of both. He believed that many, and he hoped all of those gentlemen would act from public motives only; but where the interests of men were concerned, they were often imperceptibly influenced to exert this natural bias. He thought it proper that the facts which shewed the necessity of a parliamentary interposition should be stated; the question was not now, whether the public mind should be agitated by the discussion of such a question, which had been already done by the appointment of this committee. By this measure general expectations had been raised throughout the kingdom, that a reform in the representation was seriously intended; any thing that might be considered as evading or obstructing the inquiry in the present state of this country, would be highly prejudicial. The statement of facts will shew the necessity of the interposition, and the difficulty of the subject. He would mention how far his ideas went: The boroughs might be divided under two heads; those in which freemen had votes without any limitation as to number; the other where the power of electing was vested in a small and limited number of burgesses. The former were intended to be free, and he thought it a justice due to the crown as well as to the people, that they should be made so. This, he thought, might be done, by giving a title to all freeholders, of the yearly value of ten pounds, lying within certain districts, to be appointed for that purpose, to become free of those boroughs. They consisted of above fifty; this would be a great improvement in the representation of Ireland, by a considerable accession to the democratic scale arising from freehold property in lands. Those boroughs are generally thought to have become private property; this was an usurpation on the crown as well as on the people, and no man could dispute the justice and propriety of restoring to the people those franchises which they derive from the crown, and of which they had been unjustly deprived. He thought also the representation admitted of improvement in another way: If thirty-two counties were necessary in the time of Queen Elizabeth, considering the great improvement in culture of land, and the vast increase in population since that time, a greater number of counties would be necessary now; that this was not without precedent, it had been done in one instance in the reign of Henry VIII. and an act of parliament for constituting com-

missioners for dividing counties is still in force. Such a measure would be of great public utility, not only to the representation of the people, but to the police and to the administration of justice. Some of the existing counties were confessedly too large, from which, in all those respects, considerable inconveniences had arisen; the representatives of those new counties may supply the places of such of the private boroughs as were not able to shew such titles as satisfied the House, or as for any other reasons it should be thought proper to abolish. In respect of those private boroughs, if it should be thought necessary to go into an alteration of these, it may be effected in the manner which he had mentioned in respect to the free boroughs, but he thought that the number of representatives ought not to be increased. He acknowledged, that nothing could be said in defence of the private boroughs; he thought a perfect representation was not possible to be attained in any country. No object ought to be in contemplation, but such a representation as would make this House the real organ of the people; that the House of Commons of England always acted agreeably to the sense of the people when that sense was known, could not be denied; they had therefore probably attained to that point of perfection which could be alone expected in such a system. It must be confessed, that this House had not been considered as the organ of the people, and had not always spoken their sentiments. The cry for a reform in the representation had become general throughout the kingdom; the constitution itself had become totally different in most of its great principles, from what it was supposed to be when the House of Stuart had new modelled the representation, on motives, and in a manner, which no man would defend at this day. From the arbitrary spirit which had prevailed at some of those periods, the long and frequent discontinuance of Parliament, the distracted state of this nation for a part of that time, and its distressed situation during the greatest portion of it, this subject, though the constant topic of complaint, was never before the object of inquiry; it should be more fully investigated before you come to any resolution. You should not tell the people that the representation required amendment, without suggesting the remedies. He then recommended the following mode to be adopted by the committee:—Have all those charters laid before you— inquire after those not now at the rolls; then report resolutions of fact, setting forth the state of the representation, and other resolutions containing your opinion as to the remedies proper to be applied; but let the House postpone the consideration of those resolutions till next session of Parliament, that time may be given to the members of this House to consult with their constituents, and to digest such a temperate plan of reform as may be generally acceptable. He meant

no delay; he wished to forward the measure; to obstruct or embarrass it now would be highly impolitic; but he wished to proceed with the utmost caution and deliberation, and to receive the fullest information before they finally decided on a subject of such magnitude.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE said, he would oppose the motion of the right honourable member, and support the amendment made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because the motion clashed with the great Catholic business, which it was understood ought to have taken the lead; because it might supersede the designs of the two right honourable gentlemen, who first moved in the business, and who were not now in their places, [Mr. Ponsonby and Mr. Conolly]; and he did not see what right the honourable mover had to skim the crock and take all the cream and the dainties to make up his syllabub, leaving them nothing but the skim-milk: But above all, because he thought this motion prejudged the measure, and tended to pledge the House for that which it was more than doubtful they could ever perform; and that it raised an expectation they would possibly never be able to satisfy, and which he believed at this moment to be perfectly impracticable, and, as he thought, unsafe and unwise.

By the manner in which the measure was introduced and the way in which it was debated, a bye-stander would think all was quiet throughout the kingdom, that there was neither offender nor defender, neither association or tumult, and that one general sentiment of peace and order pervaded the land. He would not say the country was in arms, but he thought, without offence, it might be insinuated that the public mind was something disturbed, and that therefore such a measure, difficult if not dangerous at all times, might now be fatal to our peace.

The right honourable gentleman had talked of the novelty of the present representation, that it had neither prescriptive or other right. He observed, there was no increase of the borough representation, (one instance only excepted) since the Revolution, and that it was from that period alone you should date your constitution. That the constitution, this beast of the world, was a mixed monarchy—an union of interests, and a mutuality of checks in the great constituent parts—and for this great end, a limited interference or interest on the part of the Crown and the Lords, had ever been acquiesced in the House of Commons. Was the entire House of Commons to be named by the King, the state would be a pure monarchy; was the House of Lords to name it, it would be an aristocracy; and were it entirely in the people, a perfect democracy; neither of which are governments that would be relished by this people—the mixture perhaps, not perfectly chaste and pure, but it was a government under which

this country had throve, under which England had become the happiest people on earth and the arbiters of the world.

Give us the English constitution, say gentlemen, with loud voices: And are there no rotten boroughs in that country? Is the representation more equal than here? Is the borough of Harristown less competent in Kildare, than Old Sarum in Wilts, where there stands not a thatched cabin within some miles distance? Appleby is not a close borough, but it was, he believed, one of the most corrupt boroughs in the empire; yet Appleby had returned Mr. Pitt, nay, he believed the right honourable gentleman himself, when he rendered his services essential to the public, was returned for the borough of Charlemont. And how stands the general representation in that country? Cornwall, at the sag-end of the kingdom, not more populous than any neighbouring county, with half its inhabitants living under ground; Cornwall sends at this hour forty-four members to the English Parliament, whilst the county of Middlesex, the cities of London and Westminster, with all their consequence and vast population, return only eight, and yet these people look not for a reform; true, there was an association for that purpose set on foot, and true it is that many of the most respectable men in that kingdom had concurred in the measure; but it is equally true also, that almost every respectable gentleman in that association has struck out his name from the list.

Coming more immediately to what he wished to state, he observed, that on any other occasion or any other subject, he should be ashamed to trespass on the House as he did, but the object of their present consideration, was too momentous to require apologies; for in it was involved nothing less as he conceived, than the peace of the country now, and at the time to come if you shall have the power of conveying your estates to your children.

It seems, Sir, said he, as if God for our sins had visited these countries, Great Britain, France and Ireland, commonly called the King's Dominions, with an epidemic and dangerous disorder which manifests itself in a rage for innovation and reform. In Great Britain and France the paroxysm having got to its crisis, the matter has been in those countries decided; in Ireland the thing is at issue.

In France, the tyranny of government had obtained to such an excess, that the people were incapable of enduring it any longer; and in the idea of reform it unhappily became the object of their mistaken zeal and wishes, to call for a complete representation of all the people, precisely in the same terms which are used by the county of Monaghan, in the resolutions they have this day passed, in their instructions to their members [which he read]; the people thus represented, were jealous of the good, and liked not the great: moderate men were soon circumvented or expelled; the lords were dismissed; and in a very short time their

king, nay, their god, were voted to be incumbrances to the state. In our long parliament, proceedings very similar occurred; they originated in the same principles, and ended in like catastrophes. But this is the event of yesterday: Louis the Sixteenth carried his dignity, with his innocence, to the scaffold; but as he had, he said, so lately enlarged on this melancholy theme, he would now only observe, that of the first national assembly, consisting of one thousand two hundred men, more than three hundred and fifty, he believed, had been butchered, and, with the exception of about sixteen or eighteen persons, the rest were banished and the property of all confiscated, and this the effect of a compleat representation of all the people! And in regard to their œconomy, such was the parsimony with which the public treasure was handled, (he knew the fact), that the expence, for the month of September last, was more than seven millions sterling; in October it exceeded eight millions five hundred thousand pounds; and that in the account of individuals, whilst many of their best respected patriots were privately remitting and vesting in our funds, sums from forty to fourscore thousand pounds for themselves; they had the inhuman impudence to refuse to their insulted and beautiful queen, the cost of a single change of common apparel!

In England it was otherwise; the good sense of the nation prevailed, and all are happy and at peace: but about the time of the meeting of their parliament, it wore such an inauspicious aspect, that the vigilance of the executive government thought it necessary to call within the circumvallation of the metropolis, all the troops for one hundred miles round. In a village where he was, (Greenwich) the Prince of Wales's regiment, which, to the glory and advantage of the nation, is now so properly called, [a loud cry of hear him! hear him!] marched in during the night. Language was held in that parliament such as never disgraced these walls. The glorious victory of Jemappes; the disgrace and defeat of the two tyrants, the King of Prussia, and the Emperor, the allies of Great Britain, were sounded in exulting triumph. But they were met by the virtues of the people, whose senses were roused by the exertions of an honourable gentleman, who boldly pushed forward in the front of the battle, and to whose talents, manhood and interposition, the peace of that kingdom may, in a great measure, be ascribed. By him the fallacy of their arguments was refuted, and the dangerous principles of their conduct exposed: this was done by an Irishman—the minister of England was not in parliament, and if it should ever happen that such services were forgot—no, they never would be forgot, for whilst memory held its seat in the breast of man, the name of Edmund Burke would be repeated with gratitude, by every true-born Englishman: the force of his eloquence and the truth of his doctrine was so irresistible, that one

by one the great matadors of the antient opposition deserted their leader, professing eternal ties of personal attachment and respect; they, however, almost all of them, voted against him; not out of any regard to the minister, on the contrary, for he did in his conscience believe, that the arch-angel Gabriel is not more detested by the devil himself, than Mr. Pitt is by many of these gentlemen; but the conduct of Administration was wise, active and vigilant, and the support given was unequivocal: the words, he believed, he could nearly recollect of one of the first characters in the kingdom, "I will not," said he, "contaminate the support I wish to give, by any unworthy insinuations which might tend to lessen the character of Administration in the eyes of the country, or that would deprive them of the confidence of the people, so necessary for them at this time." The consequence has been, something, very like an unanimity; the effects of it, peace.

Ireland is now to take her choice; she will consider the examples that are before her; the page of history need not be ransacked, the thing is recent and fresh: you see at this moment the people of England, prosperous and happy; and at the same moment, perhaps, the kennels of Paris running with blood. But God once hardened the heart of Pharoah, and if, for our transgressions, he shall, in his wisdom, permit this infatuation to continue among us; why, said he, I shall have done my duty: he owed great obligations to the country; he was discharging a part of the debt.

He had done, he said, his duty, and at this moment would add but one observation, which he wished might be as impressive upon the minds of other gentlemen, as it had been upon his own: we were yet in time to rally round the consequence of Parliament, if gentlemen were disposed to maintain its character and authority: but that, in his conscience, he truly believed it was utterly impossible in the same breath, to maintain the peace of the country, and to overthrow its Government; they would, and they must, in a crisis like this, stand or fall together.

Mr. BARRINGTON rose and said, he was not in the habit of shrinking from any public question, and should very freely deliver his sentiments upon the present occasion. When he considered the great question of a reform of Parliament, a measure which must utterly and inevitably alter the aspects of both the constituent and representative bodies of the constitution; disorganize and derange the old established form of the legislature, to make way for novel innovation and untried systems, he could only consider it as a great, momentous and important revolution, not merely or partially affecting one single branch of the legislature, but as pervading and sending its effects and influence to

every branch and every leaf of the dynasty of Ireland. Such a measure must have one of two effects; it will either send out new and vigorous fibres to form and fasten the great tree of the constitution in the soil of Ireland, or it will wither and check the vegetation of the old and firm fabric, before the new ones have struck root; in that case the first blast of democratic violence, which may blow through the land, will lay prostrate with the earth that great and sturdy oak, which has been both the pride of our ancestors and the protection of ourselves: he was not prepared to say which will be the effect, but he could not look upon the subject without trembling for the consequences. He declared himself a friend to a reform in Parliament; but a friend to a cool, temperate, and gradual reform; a reform, created by the deliberative wisdom of the legislature, and not rashly urged forward by the intemperance and passions of the nation; such a reform would destroy its own intention. He called upon this House to consider that they are already on the brink of another not less important question—another reform; the admission of the Roman Catholic body, unlimitedly, with the elective rights of the constitution. Could he consider the Roman Catholics of Ireland, merely as a religious sect dissenting from the established church, concession could not be considered as sounding like revolution; but every man in the community must see them in another form—a great and powerful, political association, united by the firmest of all ties—mutual sufferings and mutual oppression; and sincerely he hoped, that the Roman Catholics, in prosperity and power, may as readily forget the oppressions under which they groaned, as we now are to forget the grounds which gave cause to these oppressions.

The admission of the Roman Catholics to vote for members in Parliament, must consequently create in the constituent body a new and powerful operation affecting the representation, and by extending the right of franchise through the whole kingdom, give a new aspect and untried effect to the whole; this alone must have an extensive effect in the House of Commons; and, therefore, he professed himself averse to involve two great and momentous questions at the same moment, when in prudence and in principle the one ought to devise and regulate the system of its modification, by the obvious and practical effects of the other; the reform must be gradual, or it will be ruin under the mask of reform; innovation will second innovation, wound both the root and the branch at once, and the tree must perish. A delay in the question is objected to, because the voice and the majesty of the people call for an immediate reform. What is the nominal majesty of the people, which dares to dictate to the legislature of the country? Is it the real voice of the people, or is it the language of sedition and disaffected association, speaking the principles of a blasted and infamous nation on the continent?

What is the real and true majesty of the people? It is a proud obedience to the laws of the land; it is the language of the law and of the constitution, speaking through the mouth of the people, a legal and constitutional communication, from the people of the country to their legitimate, legislative and constituted authorities; that is the majesty of the people. But is the club-room of the United Irishmen the majesty of the people? Is the aggregate meeting, balloted in a room of thirty-four feet by twenty, the majesty of the people? Is the army of the defenders the majesty of the people? Or, are the disaffected associations of Belfast, who call upon the murderers and assassins of France as their brethren and friends, the majesty of the people?—No; the majesty of the people are subservient to the laws, and in the words of a right honourable gentleman, [Mr. Grattan] in the year 1785, “they are the subjects, and we are the legislature.” The motion he objected to, because it was an insidious and clandestine attempt to degrade and humble the Parliament of Ireland; because it was the first trap of a deep and insidious string of resolutions, to inveigle the opinion of the members of the House; and because it was a deep and insidious mode of pledging the House, to the principles as well as the adoption of a measure before they discussed it. Great revolutions in a country could not with safety be giddily adopted, the great landed interests of Ireland, the country gentlemen of Ireland must be consulted; their stake in the country insured their patriotism. He said, he was not prepared to lay any plan of a reform before the House, but would reserve himself for a more mature stage of the question. He then adverted to the arguments of the gentlemen, who had preceded him on the other side, which he answered with uncommon humour and address; one honourable member had entertained the House with his theatricals, the comedy of *Much Ado about Nothing*, with the farce of the *Defecer*; but acted weakly when he said, that because a servant of the crown had moved the measure, that the Government were, therefore, bound to support it; the honourable member had long supported Government, and were they obliged to adopt his principles? Another gentleman has declared that Government, out of gratitude to the kind conduct of opposition, should promote any measure they wish: but if gentlemen, in opposition, were kind enough to themselves, to support measures, which, for their own sake, they found absolutely necessary for the safety of the country, were the Government, therefore, obliged to support any measure at the present moment, tending to the overthrow of the constitution, because opposition might think it was prudent? The danger of any sudden and inconsiderate alteration in the representation, was very obvious, for the arguments of every gentleman who had spoken on the question, no two of them

could approach nearer on the principle than day and night; individual interest and not public good regulated them all: one said his scheme was to extend the districts of boroughs. Why? Because he had a better interest in the suburbs than the town. Another would give fourteen members to each county, and but one vote to each elector, so that if there was one popular man in each county, he might have all the votes, and but thirty two members returned for the kingdom. The honourable member had been two hours, he said, forming this plan; two hours more would hardly complete it. Another honourable member could give no reason for a sudden reform, but because seats in Parliament were bought like a horse. The honourable member talking of horses, put him in mind of a very fine horse he had once bought from a jockey, who engaged he had but two trifling faults; nobody would mind them for he was an excellent gelding; what were the two faults? Why, when he was turned out he was hard to catch, and when he was caught he was good for nothing. If they entered into any resolutions derogatory to their own dignity, surely if they declared they were not the real representatives of the people, they could not be competent to make laws for them; it was a dangerous, highly dangerous principle, to declare themselves unworthy the confidence of the nation: no such previous resolutions took place on the octennial bill, or any other species of reform ever adopted by Parliament, and there was one strong and more cogent reason for postponing the question for some time, until the effects of the Catholic emancipation were fully ascertained, because, when the legislature gives to the Roman Catholics the elective franchise, perhaps more; it must consequently give them a power and controul in the country, which (if they be considered a political association) can be only checked by boroughs in the hands of Protestants; for if political power be their object, it must be a political power exclusive and distinct from the Protestants, and centering in themselves; and if the boroughs be equally open to them (still considering them as a political body) as the counties, the ascendancy is no more, and we shall, precisely, change places with them (which however well he wished them) they could have no just reason to expect, for it is impossible to suppose the Roman Catholic would not prefer the Roman Catholic (at least for some time) to the Protestant, and if the preference and the power goes hand in hand, the Protestant is excluded both the government and the legislature. He finally declared his independence and attachment to the true interests of Ireland, and his determination to keep a strict eye on the conduct and principles of opposition, and to paint them in their true and genuine colours to the people.

Mr. AGNEW (of the county of Antrim) said, that seeing a disposition in that House to postpone the consideration of a par-

liamentary reform, he rose to declare that he considered the present momentous crisis as calling loudly on Parliament, to go into an immediate and serious discussion of the question. He said that the knowledge of the abuses which have crept into the constitution extended beyond those walls, and the feelings of the people were equal to their complaints. That the only method of removing discontent was to do away the cause; not by temporising palliatives, but by an adequate reform in the representation of the people; in which the people and the land should be fairly represented in an independent House of Commons; and in which the representation of property, that fundamental principle of the constitution, should have its due influence: should that question be honestly decided there, a peaceable and happy reform must result; but if the people could not find relief there, was it not to be dreaded, that from frequent disappointment, they might forget the road that led to that assembly, and look to other means of redress.

He stated, that at a time when there were some too ready to hold out republicanism, as a form of government superior to that of this country, and when the arguments of such were too well adapted to pervert the judgment, and influence the passions of the people, it should be the part of that House to give to the constitution what it wants—a virtual representation, in which there shall be a communion of interests, and a sympathy of feelings between the constituent and his trustee. They should thus, and thus only, give the lie to wild theorists, and hold out the happiest form of government that ever blessed a people, in which the preservation of civil liberty should be secured by the solid establishment of political.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM entered into an investigation of the subject, and concluded with desiring that after a full and fair and impartial enquiry, and examination of the various facts, a reform might be made upon such a just foundation as must satisfy every admirer of the British constitution—to the spirit and principles of which he was determined to adhere.

Mr. GEORGE POMSONBY. The House is called upon to give to the nation an assurance of its sincerity, and to shew, that when this committee was voted, it honestly intended to effectuate the business of a parliamentary reform. As to the gentlemen on this side, no man can object to them sinister views, or any intention to embarrass Government; their conduct has proved the contrary; every demand, every desire of Government this session, every measure which could strengthen their authority, has not only been granted without opposition, but with cheerfulness and good-will. Some days ago a proclamation against seditious and traitorous meetings was laid upon the table, we stood forward to

give our support to Government; they demanded an augmentation of three thousand men, we unanimously consented; they raised their demand to five thousand, we concurred and voted an army of twenty thousand; they introduced a bill for regulating the carriage and keeping of arms and ammunition; we thought the circumstances of the country required strong measures at this time, and we consented; so that when our conduct is examined, no man can impute to us any factious motive, in endeavouring to promote a reform of Parliament. Having thus manifested our disposition to concur in every thing, that can strengthen the Government, for the preservation of peace and of the constitution, I will now declare that I think the reform ought to be adopted this session; because, were we to defer it to the next, it would encrease the public discontent in a tenfold degree; were we to let our resolutions lie over to next session, to be carried into effect, all the little, busy, ignorant, meddling, factious, contemptible Jacobin clubs, who must by that see that we were resolved to maintain the principle and spirit of the British constitution, in giving to property, and to property only, the right of election, would call it an aristocratic trick; they would say to such people as themselves, "You have no property; are just in the same situation you were; this is no reform at all, it does not embrace every one;" and God knows what effect this rhetoric might have upon the multitude. He then said, he would not have risen this night, but that the right honourable gentleman, [Mr. William Ponsonby] who, in the early part of the session, had introduced the subject, was absent; it had been very industriously reported that the measure was brought forward by him, to embarrass the Roman Catholic question, but to demonstrate the injustice of the report, he was resolved not to present his plan to the House, until the Roman Catholic question was first disposed of.

Mr. HOBART assured the committee, that he should trouble them a very short time upon the present subject. He could not see that his right honourable friend's amendment was liable to all the objections which had been made to it; one principle of the amendment was, to let the people know the advantages of the present system, and that the authority of Parliament might thus be upheld; another principle was, that the present system of representation might not be vilified; and another, that whenever a plan was brought forward likely to be adequate, that it would be adopted; but that the House would not consent to degrade the present system in the eyes of the people, until they had heard a better one proposed. He observed, that where there were a variety of opinions upon a great political subject, it was better to adopt the motion of his honourable friend [Mr. Marcus Beres-

ford] to report progress, and give time for gentlemen minutely to consider the question.

Mr. DUQUERY contended, strenuously, in support of the resolution proposed by Mr. Grattan, and expressed the concern which he felt at seeing the manner in which the motion of that right honourable gentleman, had been received by those on the other side of the House; more especially, when it is remembered how the subject, which was now under discussion, came immediately before them. At the commencement of the present session, a motion was made by the right honourable gentleman, who has now proposed the present resolution, "to appoint a committee to inquire whether any, and what abuses, had taken place in the Administration of this country." That motion was negatived by the gentlemen on the other side of the House; and, at the same time, a member in the confidence of Administration, and high in office under them, moved, as an amendment, that a committee should be appointed, to inquire into the state of the representation of the nation; and a committee was accordingly appointed, with almost the unanimous approbation of the House, to take into consideration that serious and important question. We are now sitting, for the first time, in that committee, and we are now debating upon the first resolution proposed for our consideration. The true tendency of that resolution is, to put an end to that dangerous and unconstitutional abuse of procuring seats in Parliament, by the payment of certain sums of money, whether those sums be distributed amongst a number of electors, or paid at once into the hand of a single individual. There is the great primary grievance, and the source, perhaps, of every other political abuse which the proposed resolution is calculated to correct, and, if possible, totally to eradicate. If then we are really serious in the arduous task we have undertaken, that of endeavouring to reform the state of our representation, I can scarcely conceive how such a resolution can meet with a single negative. Is there any man in this committee who entertains a doubt that seats have been procured again and again in Parliament, by the distribution and payment of considerable sums of money, tending at once to weigh down the member who procures his seat by such unworthy practices, to corrupt the elector who votes under such influence, and to degrade the Parliament, whose seats are obtained by the violation of every constitutional principle. Surely, it will not be contended, that it is necessary for us to call evidence to our bar, to prove the existence of an abuse, which any man out of this House would hold it ridiculous to controvert; and if we are all of us convinced that such corrupt practices have prevailed to such an excess, as almost to endanger the safety of the state, ought we to hesitate in adopting the resolution now proposed,

the great object of which is to cut out by the roots that unconstitutional traffic. But, instead of acceding to this measure, the right honourable the Chancellor of the Exchequer has thought proper to move, by way of amendment, a resolution altogether distinct from that originally proposed, and totally out of the sphere of the subject now before us. That right honourable gentleman has thought proper to move you to come to a resolution, "that under the present state of the representation of the people in Parliament, our manufactures have improved, our trade has encreased, and the country has advanced in prosperity." Now, really, Sir, what that long laboured panegyric upon Parliament has to say to the present subject, I am at a loss to discover; if Parliament has done services to the nation, the people must know and feel their effects, and it is unnecessary for us to become panegyrists of our own actions. And if, on the other hand, the people should not conceive themselves so highly indebted to the justice and wisdom of Parliament, as that right honourable gentleman had endeavoured to convince them that they are, then such a profuse and unbounded eulogy upon ourselves, will tend only to exhibit Parliament in a very ridiculous point of view; let us, for one moment, reflect what was the object of the House, in appointing a committee to inquire into the state of the representation of the people? Was it not upon a presumption that some considerable abuses have taken place in that representation, which loudly calls upon our exertion to rectify? Should we then, instead of coming to a specific resolution, tending to eradicate one of the principal abuses which exist in that representation, draw up a studied panegyric upon our own conduct. Would not the House, when we come to report our proceedings and deliver in to them these lavish encomiums upon Parliament, conceive that we had very much mistaken the object of our inquiry, and mis-spent the time of our committee? The right honourable gentleman, on the other side, has called the resolutions proposed to you, by the right honourable mover on this side, a libel upon Parliament. Why so, in fact, were those very bills to which he has alluded in the course of his speech. What was that much boasted election law, which the right honourable gentleman had alluded to, and generally known by the name of Mr. Grenville's Act? That law might just as well have been considered a libel upon Parliament; for it certainly admitted one leading point, that the House of Commons, in its collective capacity, had not sufficient integrity to decide the merits of contested elections between opposite candidates, and, therefore, a sworn committee was by that act established, upon the necessary implication, that the House itself was inadequate to the purpose of justice; yet that bill, so far from being deemed a libel, was considered as a great constitutional improvement; so in the same manner, as to the osten-

nial bill, which that right honourable gentleman has made part of his eulogium upon Parliament, that bill was founded upon the presumption, that this House ought not to be trusted with the representation of the people, for a longer period than that of eight years; surely that was a strong implication of the necessity of correcting an abuse in the constitution, by making its representative body return back to the fountain of the people; and yet that law, so far from being considered as a libel upon Parliament, has ever been deemed as one of our greatest constitutional improvements. Let us, therefore, have done with saying that this resolution is a libel upon Parliament, because it goes to rectify one of the greatest abuses existing in the representation. In truth, Sir, I consider this unnecessary panegyric upon Parliament as a pretty certain omen, that we are not to hope, at present, for any effective reform; instead of beginning by correction, we commence our labours by flattery, as unbounded as some persons might think it unmerited. If we are really and truly serious in the great work we have undertaken, let us, by adopting the resolution now proposed by the right honourable gentleman near me, satisfy the nation, that we have undertaken this glorious task, with the zeal and spirit that becomes honest representatives, and not with the address and cunning that are suited only to finished courtiers.

Mr. BUSHE bore honourable testimony to the conduct of Mr. George Ponsonby and the other gentlemen in opposition, and to the support they had given to Government, more than once in this session. He was glad to observe that there was not one word said, by Mr. George Ponsonby, which militated against the amendment made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. That amendment had been deemed, by some, not to be agreeable to the order of the committee; if so, the motion made by Mr. Grattan was equally foreign from their proper business. They both went to the effects of our present representation: the one stated the expence of elections, which was one effect of our present form of government; the other stated the improvement of the country, and the progress of liberty, which were also the effect of that form; they both were true, and, as motions, they were equally regular; but he preferred that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The order of the committee was not to consider the defects only of our state of representation, but to consider it generally, the good as well as the bad.

A learned member [Mr. Marcus Beresford] had expressed an apprehension least plans of reform should take their rise, not in this House, but elsewhere. He was surprised that with these sentiments he could object to the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For what surer way could be devised for preventing plans being devised elsewhere, than for this House to

declare, that the first thing they would listen to on the subject, would be a plan proposed in this House; and what surer way to set the people upon devising plans of their own, than for us to begin with throwing down our old edifice, and telling them that we had no plan of a new one to substitute in its place.

He said he would not fight under false colours, or declare himself friend of reform. He confessed he had never seen and never devised any reform which he would vote for. The volunteer convention were not destitute of talents, but when they proposed their plan, the House might remember what a thing it was.

Of four gentlemen who had spoken this night, three have mentioned their plans; he thought none of them good, and he was sure that all of them were different. With all the defects of our present representation, he believed more people would concur to support it, than to support any other plan that had yet been suggested. Every man, indeed, would prefer that which was suggested by his own imagination. But can we be certain that a majority of the people will prefer one that may be suggested by you? Our old representation has this advantage over any which you can substitute, namely, that it is an old one. A new one, superior in other respects, must, at least be inferior in this—that it has not stood the test of time, and cannot have equal stability. If you think that even the general concurrence of the people always gives stability to a new constitution, look to France. Their new constitution had the general concurrence, and yet how long did it continue? And yet can you hope that you can have as general a concurrence, in the present temper of Ireland? I agree with a learned member [the Secretary of State] that it would be better to postpone any reform to another session. It has been called the olive branch. I believe the olive is like other trees, not likely to take root if it be planted in a storm. The temperate good sense of England, which wishes for such a measure, has also agreed to postpone it. Nor shall I be ashamed to learn from the wisdom of the wisest country in the world, and from the example of the most unfortunate. If I am mistaken, I am with great authorities; but if those who differ from me be in error, they have something to reproach themselves with, from which even France is free. For that country had not such a constitution as ours to put to hazard, and that country had not such an example of calamity before her, to give her warning of her danger. If you will reform, the first thing you should provide is strength, and union amongst yourselves; for whilst you are renewing the foundations of your Government, the edifice must be propped, or it will fall. The next thing you should consider is, whether the times be times of tranquillity. You should not touch the foundations of that building which has sheltered your ancestors and yourselves, but in the solstice of the

public mind, when the winds are at peace. But you are chusing the very equinox, when government and anarchy are contending, like day and night, for superiority, and a when a tempest is to be expected. If you will reform now, if you will reject the example of England, if you will rather precede than follow her in that reform, which, in more temperate times, is promised to be brought forward, you should at least unite in the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It does not prevent or delay your reform, but it goes to an assertion of the dignity of the Parliament, from whence that reform is to flow, and to claim a more general respect for the laws, and for the reform which you wish to propose.

Mr. CURRAN opposed the amendment proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and supported the original motion with great warmth. He examined it from different points of view. He said, that he was sorry to hear the sentiments delivered by Mr. Bute, because he thought them wrong; and next, because he considered them as speaking the opinion of Administration. The result of that gentleman's speech, he said, was to reprobate the idea of parliamentary reform altogether. He said this was not a time for sophistry or quibble. A member of Parliament ought to leave his ingenuity at the door, and bring into the House nothing but his ingeniousness and integrity. We must be besotted indeed if we thought sophisms, which could not impose upon ourselves, could make dupes of the public. The question before us was the simplest imaginable. The House had come to a resolution of inquiring "into the state of the representation." The committee had now met accordingly. What did they meet to inquire into? Was it the merits of the House of Commons? No, he said, every man knows the contrary; it was the defects of the representation complained of by the people, and admitted by the House itself. What then could the Chancellor of the Exchequer mean, by proposing a fulsome panegyric on the merits of a body, into whose defects they were ordered to inquire? If we do this, said he, we shall deceive nobody; not ourselves; not the people, they will despise and detest us, for the hypocrisy and effrontery of such a procedure. He said Parliament was at the very moment of crisis. The hope we had held out of constitutional redress, had held the disquiet of the public mind in suspense. Our present conduct must be decisive; it must fix the public hope of reform to Parliament, or shew the people they must look only to themselves. We had, he said, brought forward the first necessary step—the avowed abuse of Parliament—the sale of boroughs. Was this a fact? If you deny it, said he, we will shew you that the great body of this House are sitting

here for money, and not by election. If you admit the fact, will you say that it is not an abuse? If you stifle this by artifice, I say again, we shall become odious and contemptible to the nation, and they will look to themselves, and Ireland must take her chance of such constitution as may be made for her. If you do your duty, you may now form it yourselves.

He then stated the reform which, he said, ought to take place. A fair representation of the landed and commercial property of the nation; that, he said, ought to be done, forthwith, as cautiously as may be, but certainly within this session; otherwise, it must be lost, and the state of Ireland, at war, divided and dissatisfied, made it peculiarly necessary at this juncture. But, he said, gentlemen desired a plan. He expressed much indignation at this demand; to deny the disease, and demand the remedy, he said, was ridiculously absurd. He said he should be sorry to see a plan introduced until the necessity was confessed; it would be silly while that necessity was denied. But he had another objection to the introduction of a plan; he thought it ought to be subject to all the consideration within and without that House, which the session would allow; and he thought the House ought to insure the continuance of the session for that great object. He had also another; the Catholic question must precede a reform. Their place in the state must be decided first.

The question, he said, was short, and would be decisive. Ireland feels, that without an immediate reform, her liberty is gone. I think so too: while a single guard of British freedom, either internal or external is wanting, Ireland is in bondage; she looks to us for that great emancipation; she expects not impossibilities from us, but she expects honesty and plain dealing; and if she finds them not, remember what I predict, she will abominate her Parliament, and look for a reform to herself.

Mr. GRATTAN in reply said—The right honourable gentleman has called the submitted resolution a libel on Parliament, hoping, no doubt, that I should have introduced some strong and indelicate resolutions which would have given them an opportunity of opposing the principle of the reform of Parliament, under the colour of maintaining its reputation; but I have so framed the resolutions that none of them directly go to degrade this House, at the same time that they do most certainly arraign the practices and defects which attend the representation: the first resolution strikes directly at the sale of boroughs; it does indeed strike at the expences of elections, but it does also and directly strike at the sale of boroughs; and for so much corrects one great vice in your representation without correcting which, it is in vain to think of correcting the others. Gentlemen have said, this mo-

tion is the subject of an election bill—an election bill that compassed this part of the subject would be, for so much, a reform bill. I confess, I think the motion is but little understood; it is not conceived to reach the sale of boroughs. The words, payments for returns to serve in Parliament, mean more than expences at elections; and for that reason they are inserted: they go directly to the root of the sale of boroughs; and the reason why I began with this part of the subject is, because you have as strong evidence as you can have, or would receive, touching the sale of boroughs; you would not receive public proof, and you have already internal conviction of that abuse; therefore you cannot say against this resolution what you will be too willing to say against the others, that you have no proof.

This resolution then puts the question directly to your breast, Are you or are you not an enemy to the reform of Parliament? If you resist this motion, it is not because you want evidence, for you have all the evidence this part of the subject admits of; it is not because you exact respect for the existing constitution, for this measure is drawn up in terms of unquestionable decorum, so it is because you are not yet sincere on the subject.

The other two resolutions go to the inadequacy of the representation; the first states, proportions of which you have had proof these many years, and the third from that resolution infers that the state of your representation requires amendment; here I am under difficulties—if on the one hand to arraign, or on the other hand to leave unquestioned the present state of your House of Commons. I have taken what I think a decorous part. I have questioned its defects respectfully, without disappointing those who only wish a reform, or gratifying those who wish the degradation of Parliament. If you pass these resolutions, you must reform the representation, but I see from the opposition to the first, the propriety of keeping back the last; for if the committee will not go so far as to say that sale of boroughs are an abuse, it will not say the representation is defective; the truth is, the committee will say nothing on the subject; but it is in vain to parry it—you must reform Parliament, and you must do it this session; you have gone too far to go back. I look upon the reform of Parliament as a measure of absolute necessity, and if you resist us in one shape, we will return in twenty, until at last this great point is achieved for the country. The amendment of the right honourable member proposes, that if a plan such as the amendment describes is submitted, the committee will consider it. The right honourable gentleman forgets that the committee is appointed to inquire into the state of the representation only. The amending that state by a specific plan, is the business most honourably and disinterestedly occupied by another right honourable member, whom I wish on this subject not to come across, but follow and assist; were I to come with a specific plan to this

committee I should be guilty of attempting to do by the instrument of the committee, what he will do by the bill, propound a plan of reform; it is my object therefore in this committee to pledge you to the business, and to speed it so as that it may be completed this session of Parliament. Those gentlemen who are most impatient for a specific plan, are impatient for it in order to attack the principle, under pretence of cavilling with the plan—No, Sir, but when gentlemen are sufficiently embarked in the principle, then will be the proper time for producing a plan.

The right honourable gentleman in his amendment, invites you indeed to produce a plan, but, at the same time, tells you, it is unnecessary, for the House of Commons, in the present state of representation, has done every thing which your trade and your constitution require; and under pretence of defending the character of Parliament, he suggests the practical excellence of your present representation; his amendment, therefore, goes against the reform of Parliament; but, fearing such an amendment is too strong, he softens it afterwards, and says, it is true if you can find what he thinks you cannot; such a plan of reform as shall secure you all your advantages, and give you more than indeed he will. What! adopt it!—No, consider it. Who will consider? not the House, but a committee appointed to another purpose—for the purpose of enquiring into the state of the representation, not framing a bill for the reform of Parliament; so that his amendment is objectionable for its informality as well as its contents. He cannot propose it in the committee, and he ought not to propose it in the House; and proposed in either, it injures the great question to which we are all attentive, and most of us pledged—the Reform of Parliament.

Major HOBART. I must beg to be understood as having given no opinion regarding the question of reform, but I am against any resolution which reflects on Parliament. I think you should report progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. GRATTAN. I lament it—what the member has said has damped my joy, but shall not slacken my efforts.

The question being at length put on the amendment, there appeared

For the amendment	—	153
Against it	—	71
Majority for the amendment	—	81

The House adjourned untill Tuesday next.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1793.

Mr. BAGWELL moved, that the returning officers of the different boroughs in this kingdom do make a return of the number of electors for each borough.

After a short conversation between Sir H. Langrish, Mr. H. Cavendish, and Mr. M. Beresford, Mr. Bagwell consented to withdraw his motion.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY gave notice, that after the Catholic bill was disposed of, he had a specific plan of a parliamentary reform to submit to the consideration of the House.

Mr. FORBES asked the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Hobart] when the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics would be brought in?

Mr. HOBART assured the honourable gentleman that there was no man in the House, or out of the House, that wished to bring forward the measure sooner than he did. In the course of this week it would certainly be brought forward, and the only cause of it being so long delayed, was on account of the extreme difficulty of preparing the bill.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow, the postage bill; also the bill for the encouragement of seamen and marines.

Postponed going into committee on the bill for regulating the payment of drawbacks on the exportation of sugar.

Went into committee on ways and means, Mr. MASON in the chair.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved the additional duty of three shillings and three pence a head on the exportation of live cattle.

Mr. VANDELEUR and Mr. GRAYDON objected to this tax, as impolitic and injurious to this kingdom.

At the suggestion of Mr. CUFFE,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER agreed to lower it to two shillings and two pence a head, making the whole duty on the export of three shillings and three pence a head; which was agreed to.

He then moved the remainder of the duties, which were agreed to. And on the House being resumed,

Ordered, That the report be received to-morrow.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1793.

House in committee on the marine bill; went through it; report to be received to-morrow.

Mr. MASON brought up the report of the committee of ways and means.

When the question was put, on the duty of three-shillings per head on live cattle exported,

Mr. VANDELEUR rose to oppose it on the ground of its falling rather on the landed property of the country than on the consumer in England; and also as it tended to lay waste a great part of the country which was fit only for pasture. He concluded by moving, that the duty, instead of three-shillings, should be fixed at one-shilling per head, which is the present duty on exportation.

Mr. GRAYDON supported the motion. He asserted, that the tax of three shillings was too high for regulation, and too low for revenue. He denied that the tax would fall, as it was asserted, on the consumption.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER defended the tax, as likely to operate in favour of the agriculture of the country, and to be productive, since it was laid on a trade, the profits of which could very well afford it. In order to oblige gentlemen, he had agreed, the foregoing night, to reduce the proposed tax from four shillings to three shillings. This concession seemed rather to have offended than conciliated gentlemen; he would therefore be cautious not to offend them again by agreeing to the proposed reduction.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH supported the tax, because he was convinced that it would not in any degree limit the trade, and as falling on the consumer in England would be so much drawn from that country for the benefit of this.

Mr. CONOLLY was also of opinion that this tax would fall on the consumption. He supported the tax as being intended to enable us to give efficient assistance to Great Britain, which he thought at this time was peculiarly necessary.

Mr. GRATTAN professed himself a friend to the tax, and paid a compliment to the moderation which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had manifested in the new duties. He believed this tax would fall ultimately on another country; and as to limiting

the export of live cattle which gentlemen seemed to apprehend it would do, he was not sure that even if it did so it would be very mischievous, since it was not very certain that there was too much meat in the country, or that the people of the country eat too much of it.

Mr. EGAN spoke also in favour of the duty, and said he had designed to introduce a bill for the purpose, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken up the business.

The question was then put on the original motion, of three shillings, and passed.

The remainder of the report was agreed to, and leave given to introduce bills pursuant to the resolutions contained therein.

Major HOBART, previous to asking leave to bring in a bill for the improvement of barren land, thought it right to inform the House that he had consulted on that subject with a right honourable gentleman who had formerly introduced a similar bill, and that it was with his concurrence he now took up the measure. He concluded by moving leave to bring in the bill.

Mr. GRATTAN assented to the truth of what the right honourable gentleman had stated. He had had the honour and the misfortune annually since the year 1787, to introduce a bill for this purpose, and had been uniformly unsuccessful in carrying it through. The right honourable gentleman who now took up the measure, he had no doubt, would in this instance have his usual success. He was very happy the bill had fallen into such auspicious hands; if it went as far as that which he had introduced, he would give it his warmest support; if it should fall short of what he thought necessary, he would think it his duty to differ in sentiment with the right honourable mover of it.

Leave was granted, and the bill was shortly after introduced by Major Hobart; it was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Wednesday next.

Sir L. PARSONS observed that he had abstained from stating his sentiments to the House of Monday last, on the business of reform, from the lateness of the hour to which the discussion was protracted. He considered the question of reform and the Catholic franchise to be intimately connected, and that therefore they ought to be considered together. He professed that he felt a very considerable degree of anxiety on both subjects, thinking as he did that something ought to be done, but that what should be done ought to be moderate. He had never courted popularity,

nor had ever introduced into that House either bill or resolution. If on either of these subjects he should submit a proposition to the House, he most solemnly declared it should arise only from his regard to the peace of the country. On Monday he understood the business of reform was to be again before the House. On that day he should lay his thoughts on the Catholic question before the House, though he was apprehensive they would be pleasing to gentlemen on neither side of it. That fear, however, should not deter him from speaking his mind freely, as the present, he thought, was a crisis at which, if the independent country gentlemen did not step in and interfere for the safety of the state, the country was ruined. Something he thought should be done for the Catholics, but he was not prepared to go as far as the right honourable gentleman [Major Hobart] proposed. As to reform, he had no doubt but another right honourable gentleman had the best intentions in what he proposed on that subject; but in his mind every change in a constitution such as ours ought to be gradual. On Monday he, he said, would state his thoughts on both subjects at length.

Mr. CONOLLY was apprehensive that he had been misunderstood as to the Catholic business and reform. He was the last man in the country that would say any thing that might tend to encrease the agitation of the public mind at a time like this. When he had mentioned his design of urging a parliamentary reform at a proper time, he thought it necessary to do so in consequence of the recommendation from the throne in behalf of the Catholics. It was his idea, that when any body of men are admitted into a constitution who were not before entitled to the benefits of it, a change is made in that constitution. If then at the instance of the executive government a change is to be made in the constitution for the benefit of a certain description of men, why ought not a reform to be adopted, of which the whole nation was desirous?

He ended by professing himself ready to give every aid to his Catholic fellow-subjects, and perfectly sincere as to parliamentary reform.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1793.

Mr. COOKE presented the mutiny bill; which was read a first time.

The House resolved itself into committee, to take into consideration the report of the committee on the state of the duties of hearth-money.

Mr. BUSHE moved the following resolution :

Resolved, That it appears to this committee, that the holders and occupiers of houses which contain but one hearth, and of farms to the annual amount of five pounds, and who are not in possession of goods and chattels to the amount of ten pounds, and who are not freeholders, or under license, should be exempted from the tax on hearths.

After a short observation between the Solicitor General the Speaker, Mr. Beresford, and Mr. Burgh, the resolution was agreed to.

The following resolutions were then moved, and agreed to :

Resolved, That a duty of 2*s.* 2*d.* be paid for every hearth in a house containing two hearths.

Resolved, That a duty of 2*s.* 2*d.* be paid for every hearth in a house containing three hearths.

Resolved, That the sum of 9*s.* 9*d.* be paid by each house containing four hearths.

Resolved, That the sum of 12*s.* 5½*d.* be paid by each house containing six hearths.

Resolved, That the sum of 2*s.* 8½*d.* be paid for every hearth in each house containing six hearths and upwards.

The House being resumed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, severally presented

The export bounty bill—the French treaty bill, which were each read a first time.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1793.

The post-office bill—the seamen's bill, were severally read a third time, and passed.

Mr. WANDESFORD moved leave to bring in a bill for repairing the road from Castlecomer to Kilkenny—Leave granted; the bill introduced and read a first time.

Mr. MASON brought up the report of the committee of the whole House, which sat to consider the report of the committee appointed to enquire into the state of the hearth-tax.

The report was read and ordered to lie on the table.

The substance of the report is a resolution of the committee, that

Of every house having two hearths, each	}	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
hearth shall pay annually		2	2
Of every house with three hearths, each		2	3
Of every house with four hearths, each		2	5½
Of every house with five hearths, each		2	6½

Of every house with six hearth, and up- } $\begin{matrix} s. & d. \\ 2 & 8\frac{1}{2} \end{matrix}$
wards, each - - -

Mr. FORBES presented his responsibility bill ; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Thursday next.

He also presented his pension bill ; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Friday next.

Mr. MAXWELL moved that these bills should be printed.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH observed, that as he understood these bills were the same which had been so often introduced and printed, and which no gentleman ever looked at, he thought it would be a waste of the public money to print them.

Mr. FORBES said, that though the right honourable baronet might not have thought it worth his while to read these bills, other gentlemen did, and probably the House would this session think it right to pay very great attention to them ; even the right honourable baronet himself might be induced at this time to give those bills a very serious consideration.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH replied, that notwithstanding all the inuendoes of the peculiar importance of these bills at this time, he would treat them as he should think right.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that these bills were constituent parts of an internal reform of the House of Commons, and that the public would judge of the sincerity of the House, and of government on that subject, by the treatment which these bills should meet.

The bills were ordered to be printed.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a petition from the minister, churchwardens, and parishioners of St. Bridget's parish, against the police establishment.

The House resolved into committee of ways and means.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved the new taxes, by which to raise the additional 10,000*l.* which were agreed to.

The House then resumed, and ordered the report for to-morrow.

Major DOYLE called upon Mr. Secretary Hobart to know, if agreeable to the notice he had given, he was ready to bring in the bill for the relief of the Catholics within this week, of

which he reminded him there remained but one day more for business.

Major HOBART assured the honourable member that no one was more anxious than himself to expedite the measure; much difficulty had occurred to the law officers in framing the bill, but he should certainly introduce it on Monday, and hoped that one day could not make any material difference.

Major DOYLE replied, that he was far from imputing to the right honourable member any intentional delay. He believed he was very sincere in his wishes, but he thought it very essential, that the great body of the people, who were so much interested on the subject, should believe it also. He thought it unwise, to suffer the public mind to be agitated by a constant state of suspense, naturally creating a degree of suspicion, which however ill-founded, it might be in the present instance, was certainly highly injurious to public tranquillity. He particularly was averse to its introduction on Monday, as that day had been fixed for the discussion of another important subject, the parliamentary reform, and he deprecated the idea of implicating those two great questions, which should be kept separate and distinct. He declared he pressed this matter not for the purpose of embarrassing the Administration, but from the very opposite motive; for he declared most solemnly that at this important crisis he would give them every assistance in his power, and he was sure the honourable friends with whom he acted, would do the same, to strengthen their hands against the common enemy; which could only be done by conciliating our people. United at home, he said, we may defy all foreign enemies.

Mr. HOBART said he had long since declared it his opinion, that it was improper to implicate these subjects. He thought the Catholic question should have precedence of the other, and did not see how bringing in the bill on Monday would blend the subjects, as it would only be read a first time; at which period it was unusual to debate a bill.

The question of adjournment was moved.

Mr. GRATTAN. The question of adjournment being before you, I speak to the point that occasions it—the Popery bill, which was to have been immediately taken into consideration—which was delayed until the latter end of this week, and is now further postponed. The postponing this question in effect postpones the others, and occasions the delay of the redress of grievances; the bill of reform waits on that measure, and in it is comprehended the expectation of the kingdom. The right honourable mover of the bill for reforming the Commons House of Par-

liament, has told you that as soon as the Popery bill has passed this House, he then will bring in the bill of reform; until the Secretary shall choose to move in the one, we are kept back as to the other; and let me assure his Majesty's Minister and this House that if they propose to maintain in this country a particle of authority, they must accede to a redress of grievances. The nation begins to doubt the sincerity of those ministers. I know on our side every thing is sincere. I apprehend it is not so on their's; we found in the question of Monday a change in their language, and their conduct—but we tell them it is in vain to trifle with the country; you are now in a situation in which it may be necessary to call out the exertions of the nation for its defence; you never will command those exertions until you agree to redress her grievances, and to reform her representation, which is one of them. My friend has now introduced two bills, a pension-bill, and a responsibility-bill. He introduces his place-bill I believe to morrow. Two of those bills constitute the internal part of the reform of Parliament—we will debate them the next week, and put the question to his Majesty's Minister, whether they are friends or enemies to the reform, that the nation may know what she is to expect from them.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY thought the Catholic bill should precede a reform; for it was absurd to regulate the form of elections, before it was ascertained of whom the electors and elected were to consist. He nor his friends wished to withdraw their confidence from Government on those subjects, unless they should manifestly become disloyal to the country. He repeated his professions of being sincere and serious as to reform.

Dr. BROWNE said, that he lamented that the Catholic bill was not likely to be brought forward sufficiently soon to be discussed, previous to the assizes which were not ten days distant. He thought gentlemen should speak their minds on that question, and declared that he did not think it would be justifiable to give Government more strength than they had already gotten, until they gratified the wishes of the people.

Mr. EGAN was severe on the law officers of the crown, for not being able in a fortnight to frame a bill agreeable to the propositions made by the right honourable major, at the opening of the session. He advised that gentleman to bring the bill forward in any shape, that he might get the assistance of gentlemen on his side of the House, in completing it. He advised him by no means to implicate the two questions; for if he did, what could be done by the paper sculls of his coadjutors, when they were not able in a fortnight to form a bill on one of them.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL vindicated the ability of the crown officers, by stating the great difficulty of forming a bill which must have reference to above five and thirty acts of parliament.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, one of the best measures to secure peace was to give Government credit where they deserved it; if gentlemen would lay aside declamatory debate, and confine themselves merely to enacting for the public good, his side of the House would meet them.

Mr. FORBES thought this insinuation was not to be borne—Had not they given Government a very great degree of credit? Had they not voted an enormous supply, an unexampled military establishment; in short, every thing that had been required—and that on the most equivocal conduct? It was now time for the right honourable gentleman to shew that there was some solvency in his Administration. He had that day presented two bills which would put that solvency to trial—he would present one more. These went immediately to correct some of the grievances which the people of Ireland complained of. In the name of that people, he called on the right honourable gentleman to support them.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1793.

Read a third time and passed, the bill for regulating and extending the tobacco trade; also, the bill for regulating the allowance of drawback and payment of the bounty on the exportation of sugar.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER presented the loan bill, which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next.

Mr. HOBART informed the House, that he was directed by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to deliver a message to the House, which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the table; and the same was also read by Mr. Speaker, and is as followeth:

“ WESTMORELAND.

“ I have his Majesty's commands to acquaint the House of Commons, that the assembly now exercising the powers of government in France have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of his Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations and of the most positive stipulations of treaty, and have since on the most

groundless pretences, actually declared war against his Majesty and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, his Majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honour of his crown, and to vindicate the rights of his people; and his Majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a just and necessary war, and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the further progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice.

“ In a cause of such general concern his Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with his Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe.

“ W.”

Lord HILLSBOROUGH moved, that an humble address be presented to his Majesty, for the message which has been sent to this House by his Majesty's command.

Mr. CUFFE seconded the motion; which was agreed to *nem. con.*

Ordered, that a committee be appointed to draw up an address to be presented to his Majesty, upon the said resolution; and a committee was appointed accordingly, who are to meet on Monday next.

Resolved, That an humble address of thanks be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, for his communication delivered to this House.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1793.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH presented from the committee appointed to prepare it, the following address to his Majesty; which was unanimously agreed to:

“ *Most gracious Sovereign.*

“ We your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Ireland in Parliament assembled, beg leave to approach your Majesty with our unfeigned thanks for the message which has been sent to us by your Majesty's command, acquainting us that the assembly now exercising the power of go-

vernment in France have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of your Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against your Majesty and the United Provinces.

"We assure your Majesty that whilst we feel the utmost indignation at the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, we are happy in being assured that your Majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honour of your crown, and to vindicate the rights of your people.

"Your Majesty may rely with confidence on the firm and effectual support of your faithful Commons, and in the zealous exertions of your Majesty's brave and loyal people of Ireland, in prosecuting a just and necessary war, and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the further progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good, faith, humanity and justice.

"We assure your Majesty that we learn with the utmost satisfaction that in a cause of such general concern your Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with your Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe."

Mr. HOBART said, having on a former occasion given my opinion more at large upon the Roman Catholic question, I shall not now farther trouble the House, than in presenting the bill for the further relief of the Roman Catholics; which having done, I shall move to have it printed, and read a second time on Friday next.

The bill was then read a first time, and is as follows:

"Whereas various acts of parliament have been passed, imposing on his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion many restraints and disabilities, to which other subjects of this realm are not liable; and from the peaceable and loyal demeanour of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, it is fit that such restraints and disabilities shall be discontinued:

"Be it therefore enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion shall not be liable or subject to any penalties, forfeitures, disabilities, or incapacities, or to any laws for

the limitation, charging, or discovering of their estates and property, real or personal, save such as his Majesty's subjects of the Protestant religion are liable and subject to, and that such parts of all oaths required to be taken by persons voting at elections for members to serve in Parliament, as import to deny that the person taking the same as a Papist, or married to a Papist, or educates his children in the Popish religion, shall not hereafter be required to be taken by any voter, but shall be totally omitted by the person administering the same, any statute now in force to the contrary of any of the said matters in any wise notwithstanding.

“ Provided always, that nothing herein before contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to repeal or alter any law or act of Parliament now in force, by which certain qualifications are required to be performed by persons enjoying any offices or places of trust under his Majesty, his heirs and successors, other than as herein after is enacted.

“ Provided also, that nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to give persons professing the Popish religion a right to vote at any parish vestries for levying of money to rebuild or repair parish churches, or for the salary of the parish clerk.

“ Provided also, that nothing herein contained shall extend to authorise any person professing the Roman Catholic religion, to have or keep in his possession, any arms, armour, amunition, or any warlike stores, sword-blades, barrels, locks, or stocks of guns or fire-arms, or to exempt such persons from any forfeiture or penalty inflicted by any act respecting arms, armour or amunition in the hands of any Papist, or respecting Papists having or keeping such war-like stores, save and except persons of the Roman Catholic religion seized of a freehold estate of 100*l.* a year, or possessed of a personal estate of 1000*l.* or upwards, who are hereby authorised to keep arms as Protestants now by law may; and also save and except Roman Catholics possessing a freehold estate of 10*l.* yearly value, and less than 100*l.* or a personal estate of 100*l.* and less than 1000*l.* who shall have, at the session of the peace in the county in which they reside, taken the oath of allegiance prescribed to be taken by an act passed in the 13th and 14th years of his present Majesty's reign, entitled, an act to enable his Majesty's subjects of whatever persuasion to testify their allegiance to him, and also in open court swear and subscribe an affidavit, that they are possessed of a freehold estate yielding a clear yearly profit to the person making the same of 10*l.* or a personal property of 100*l.* above his just debts, specifying therein the name and nature of such freehold, and nature of such personal property; which affidavits shall be carefully preserved by the clerk of the peace, who shall have for his trouble a fee of 6*d.* and no more, for every such affidavit; and the person making such

affidavit, and possessing such property, may keep and use arms so long as they shall respectively possess a property of the annual value of 10*l.* and upwards, if freehold, or the value of 100*l.* if personal, in like manner as his Majesty's Protestant subjects may, any statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

“ And be it enacted, that it shall and may be lawful for persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to hold, exercise, and enjoy all civil and military offices or places of trust or profit under his Majesty, his heirs and successors, in this kingdom, and to hold or take any professorship in any university or college, except a professorship of divinity in the college of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin, and to hold any office or place of trust in any lay body corporate without taking or subscribing the oaths of allegiance, supremacy or abjuration, or making or subscribing the declaration required to be taken, made and subscribed to enable any person to hold and enjoy any of such places, and without receiving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the rites and ceremonies of the church of Ireland; provided that every such person shall take and subscribe the oath appointed by the said act passed in the 13th and 14th years of his Majesty's reign, entitled, an act to enable his Majesty's subjects, of whatever persuasion, to testify their allegiance to him.

“ Provided always, and be it enacted, that nothing herein contained shall extend, or be construed to extend, to enable any person to sit or vote in either Houses of Parliament, or to hold, exercise, or enjoy the offices of Lord Lieutenant, Lord Deputy, or other chief governor or governors of this kingdom, Lord High Chancellor or Keeper or Commissioner of the Great Seal of this kingdom, Lord High Treasurer, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Chief Justice of the court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, Lord Chief Baron of the court of Exchequer, Justice of the court of King's Bench or Common Pleas, or Baron of the court of Exchequer, Master or Keeper of the Rolls, Secretary of State, Vice Treasurer or Deputy Vice-treasurer, Teller and Cashier of the Exchequer, or Auditor General, Chief Commissioners of his Majesty's revenues of customs or excise, Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Deputy or other chief governor or governors of this kingdom, Member of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, Prime Serjeant, Attorney General, Solicitor General, second and third Serjeants at Law, King's Counsel, Masters in Chancery, Provost, or Fellow of the College of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth near Dublin, Post-master General, Master and Lieutenant General of his Majesty's Ordnance, Commander in Chief of his Majesty's forces, Generals on the Staff, and Sheriffs of any county in this kingdom, or any office contrary to the rules, orders, and direction made and established by the Lord Lieutenant and council, in pursuance of the act passed in the 17th and 18th years of the reign of King

Charles II. entitled, an act for the explaining of some doubts arising upon an act, entitled, an act for the better execution of his Majesty's gracious declaration for the settlement of his kingdom of Ireland, and satisfaction of the several interests of adventurers, soldiers, and other his subjects there, and for making some alterations of and additions unto the said act, for the more speedy and effectual settlement of this kingdom, unless he shall have taken, made, and subscribed the oaths and declaration, and performed the several requisites which by any law heretofore made and now of force are required to enable any person to sit or vote, or to hold, exercise, and enjoy the said offices respectively.

" Provided also, and be it enacted, that nothing in this act contained shall enable any person professing the Roman Catholic religion to take or enjoy any advowson or right of presentation to any ecclesiastical benefice whatsoever.

" And be it enacted, that no person professing the Roman Catholic religion shall be liable to or subject to any penalty for not attending divine service on the Sabbath day, called Sunday, in his or her parish church.

" Provided also, and be it enacted, that nothing herein contained shall be construed to extend to authorise any Popish priest, or reputed Popish priest, to celebrate marriage between Protestant and Protestant or between any person who hath been, or professed himself or herself to be a Protestant at any time within twelve months before such celebration of marriage and a Papist, unless such Protestant and Papist shall have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant religion; and that every Popish priest, or reputed Popish priest, who shall celebrate any marriage between two Protestants, or between any such Protestant and Papist, unless such Protestant and Papist shall have been first married by a clergyman of the Protestant religion, shall forfeit the sum of 500*l.* one moiety to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, and the other moiety to the person or persons who shall sue for the same by action of debt, bill, plaint, or information, in any of his Majesty's courts of record, wherein no essoine, protection, wager of law, or more than one imparlance shall be allowed, and shall not be liable to any other punishment for such offence.

" And whereas it may be expedient, in case his Majesty, his heirs and successors, shall be pleased so to alter the statutes of the college of the holy and undivided Trinity of Queen Elizabeth, near Dublin, and of the university of Dublin, as to enable persons professing the Roman Catholic religion to take degrees in the said university; to remove any obstacle which now exists by statute law.

" Be it enacted, that from and after the day of
it shall not be necessary for any person, upon taking any of the degrees usually conferred by the said university, to make or subscribe any declaration, or to take any oath, save

the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding."

The bill was ordered to be read a second time on Friday next.

Sir L. PARSONS then observed to the Speaker, that there never was a more important moment; public expectation is wound to the highest; we must give what will gratify, but will not destroy; an error now may bring on years of calamity; you have many things to fear; the exorbitance of popular desire; the reluctance of ministers to change; the divisions which subsist among yourselves. We may however do a great benefit to our country, we owe much to it. The popular effervescence directed well, may administer health to the constitution; it has already awoken ministers from their dream of omnipotence, and you from your oscurancy over the public wrongs; it has done more; it has called forth an acknowledgment of the dilapidations which time has made in your constitution, and produced a righteous resolution towards its amendment. Never did I see, never did I hear of a more dignified assembly than you appeared at the beginning of this session, when the subject of parliamentary reform was first proposed. So many men making such stupendous sacrifices at the shrine of the public weal. It seemed to me like a kind of miracle, which I hardly had senses to believe; every one on every side uttering such sentiments, as if the sacred flame of liberty had dropped from heaven upon your heads and filled you with its inspirations. Proceed now to act, as you have spoke.

There are two great objects which agitate the public mind; the extension of privileges to the Catholics, and the reform of Parliament; they are both intimately connected with each other. I confine myself now to that part of the Catholic subject, which relates to franchise and representation; every thing else is comparatively of little importance, and should be considered distinctly. I say, then Catholic enfranchisement and parliamentary reform are intimately connected with each other; and he is but a puny statesman who, in considering them, would consider them separately; for the extent of what you give to the Catholics depends upon the reform, and the effect of the reform depends upon the extent of franchise you give to the Catholics; he therefore who would separate them, would take a partial, imperfect, and contracted view of each. It is therefore I desire your attention to-day, that before we go into either, we may take a general view of both, that we may see what may be done to heal the present discontents, and done safely. This country cannot prosper while it continues in this state of fermentation; nor can you have any repose nor even assurance of any security, such is the perturbed state of the public mind. I shall therefore state what I think

will restore tranquillity to the country. I do not say it will give perfect content, for nothing will effect that, but it will content every reasonable and moderate man; and then we may without danger proceed to repress the rest.

What I shall propose will not perhaps be perfectly agreeable to either party; neither to those who are in power, nor to those who are aspiring to power; if however it is adopted and saves my country, I care not for myself. If it does not, I have that consolation of which nothing can deprive me—that I have done my duty, and that I have an approving tribunal in my own bosom.

First, then, as to the Catholics—

The Catholics have been deposed from all authority in this country; for a century they were (such were the unhappy circumstances of the times) unavoidably deposed; and I will lift my voice against any man who defames our Protestant ancestors for that deposition. Had the ancestors of the Catholics been triumphant, they would have done the same; they did do the same. But let the conduct of all our ancestors on both sides rest in oblivion. It is not the part of Irishmen to disparage the characters of those who went before them; be their sect or party what it might, let it be remembered, that they were still Irishmen, and that their blood is at this day running through our veins. Where we can, we should adorn their tombs with trophies; where we cannot, we should leave their memories to sleep in peace.

If the Catholic Parliament of James II. was moved by a persecuting spirit, I am sorry for it, because it is a blemish upon so great a portion of the Irish character of that day. If the Protestant Parliament that succeeded them, were moved by the same spirit, I am still sorer for it; but then I look for the vindication of all our ancestors in the temper of the times. I look to England at that period, and there I see the same spirit. I look to France, and there I see Louis XIV. just before the revolution, revoking the edict of Nantz, and persecuting and banishing 500,000 Protestants out of his dominions. But when I consider, that the parties in Ireland were nearly balanced; that is, the Protestants were the less numerous, but had a great support from England; the Catholics were the more numerous, but had, but a small support from France; in this equipoise of party I see, that some oppression was necessary, which-ever party was successful, in order that it might preserve its pre-eminence. Not so in England, there the Protestants were omnipotent, therefore oppression by them was persecution. In France, the Catholics were omnipotent, therefore oppression by them too was persecution; but in Ireland, the powers were nearly equal, and therefore what in France and England was persecution, in Ireland was policy.

It is thus I rescue the characters of all Irishmen at that period ; and if a spirit of intolerance is imputable to them, it is an hundred times more imputable to their great and enlightened neighbours in England and France, not to mention all the other kingdoms of Europe, in which, till the other day, the most cruel and barbarous persecutions on account of religion were practised. But let us draw a curtain over these unhappy periods of our history ; it is not what Protestants or Catholics have been that we are to consider, but what they are now.

To give some participation of franchise to the Roman Catholics is no longer a matter of choice, but of the most urgent and irresistible policy. When Protestants of all descriptions were united in withholding it, and when England backed them in doing so, it might be withheld. But is this the state of things now ? Are the Protestants united ? Is England aiding ? No—but the reverse. Add to all this an impending and tremendous war. and then I ask, can the claim to the Catholics be altogether resisted ? Impossible.

I do not however state this to insinuate to the Catholics, that their power in this country is irresistible. No—while their conduct is temperate, and what will gratify them reasonable, it may be so ; but were they intoxicated with their present success, and infligated by any mischievous incendiary to proceed to any thing unreasonable in act or demand, they would find the Protestants once more united against them, England united against them, many of their own persuasion united against them, and their present strength would become present imbecility.

It is my opinion then, that the elective franchise ought not to be imparted to any Catholic, who hath not a freehold property of 20*l.* a year. But first let me observe, that I never yet spoke on any subject in this House respecting the Catholics, save a few words the other night ; nor did I ever give a vote against any measure in which was involved any Catholic claim. I did not vote for the rejection of the Catholic petition in the last session. Any thing that this House has once done, should be spoken of with respect ; I shall therefore only say, that I greatly disapproved of that measure. I rose to state my reasons against it, but at the same instant a leading gentleman in the opposition arose. I gave way. He stated the sentiment of his friends to be decidedly for the rejection of the petition. He was rapidly followed by the right honourable Secretary with the same sentiment.

In this general confluence of parties, I could not hope that my voice would be of any avail ; and being peculiarly circumstanced with respect to my constituents, I thought it would be imprudent in me to give an inefficient vote, which I know would be vulnerable to much misrepresentation. I therefore immediately arose and left the House. After this, I trust, it will not be supposed, that I entertain any illiberality of sentiment with respect to the Catholics. Religion is a subject, upon which prejudice so often

over-rules reason, even in the most candid minds, that saying so much of one's self in order to remove such an impression, will, I hope, be deemed somewhat excuseable. Now to proceed. Every one admits that the number of the Catholics greatly exceeds that of the Protestants, consequently if the Catholics had an equal right of franchise, they must become the majority of voters at almost every popular election. I do not say, that at this instant the number of Catholics who have 40s. freeholds is greater than of Protestants. But I say it would immediately be so. Perhaps most of the Catholics now have but leases for years; but landlords, wishing to encrease their own consequence, would almost every where convert them into leases for lives; and though the Catholics might not in many instances have 40s. profit, yet we know, that when it comes any thing near to that sum, the lower order of people will be tempted to vote from it. I therefore say, that if Catholics of 40s. freeholds were allowed to vote, the number it would admit would be immense and overwhelming.

Some I know think that these inferior Catholics would be so dependent upon their landlords, who are mostly Protestants, that they might be admitted to the franchise without any danger. To this I say, that though they might vote with their landlords, they might also vote against them; interest might lead them one way, but bigotry might lead them another; for though I believe the higher class of Catholics to be as liberal as any men, the lower class we know are not so; they are too ignorant to be so.

If you say that their prejudices were occasioned by their oppression, and that they will cease with that oppression, I ask, have the Protestants had no prejudices? and yet how were they oppressed? It is the expiring embers of civil discords which inflame the sects against each other, not oppression; and though abolition of distinctions may cool, it will not at once quench them. Had the Protestants prejudices against the Catholics until now, or had they not? If you say they had not, I ask, how can you account for their with-holding so much from the Catholics until the other day? How can you account for their with-holding so much until now? Was it policy? If it was policy, what has produced the sudden change? If it was not policy, must it not have been prejudice? How can you account for your own sentiment on this subject in the last session, and your change of sentiment since?

If any franchise to Catholics was dangerous then, will not every franchise to them be dangerous now? or if not, must you not confess that you were actuated by prejudice in the last session, and then what follows? That you, the most enlightened assembly in the nation—you, on the eminence of legislative power—you were so actuated by prejudice in the last session, that you would not even suffer a petition from the Catholics to lie in neglect and oblivion on your table, and which only in humble language implored, much less than you are now going to grant; can you then sup-

pose, that the wretched Catholic peasant, wrapped in the thickest shades of ignorance, and scared by superstition and bigotry, that he should have no prejudices, or that he should not have very strong ones?

By granting franchise then to the inferior Catholics, what do you do? You give franchise to a body of men in great poverty, in great ignorance; bigotted to their sect and their altars; repelled by ancient prejudices from you, and at least four times the number of you. You give them all at once the elective franchise, by which they will almost in every county in three provinces out of the four, be the majority of electors, controuling you, overwhelming you, resisting and irresistible. I cannot conceive a phrenzy much greater than this. Allow them every virtue that elevates man—still this is a trial, that no body of men, that are or ever were, should be put to.

I think as well of the Catholics as I do of any body of men in this country or any other, but still I would not trust so much to any body of men in such circumstances. Not to the Protestants to whom I belong; not to the Dissenters whom I highly respect. I can only consider the Catholics as men, and they must be more than men, if, in such a situation, they could be safely entrusted with such a power.

But still some men think that the inferior Catholics would not abuse this power. I do not say it is certain that they would; neither can you say that it is certain they would not; and this is a case in which nothing should be left to uncertainty, because upon this every thing else depends. Suppose you gave the inferior Catholics franchise, and that they should meet in all their parishes to determine on the exercise of it, as they lately did, to determine on the attainment of it; and that they should nominate in their chapels their representatives to the Parliament, as they lately did their delegates to the convention, what would there be to stop them? The power of their landlords might do much, but the power of religion might do much more. How much might these people be wrought upon by their priests, at their altars, working upon their superstition and poverty? How easily might they be persuaded, that their temporal as well as their eternal felicity depended upon their uniting together in the exercise of their franchise. I do not say, that all this would follow; but I say, that all this, and more might follow; and therefore that we should not wantonly risk it.

Some think it safe to give the elective franchise to the inferior Catholics on this supposition, that they are so inferior in property, few can acquire it, and therefore the Protestants will still be the majority of electors. To determine this, consider the state of the country. First the great increase of tillage. Those large farms, which a few years ago were all in pasture grounds, each occupied by a single Protestant farmer, are now broken into several

parcels tenanted for the most part by Catholic husbandmen, so that seven or eight Catholics hold the ground at present which one Protestant held formerly. Will not most of these be voters? Consider this also; land has risen within five or six years one-fourth in its value. Land which, six years ago, you could not let formore than 20s. an acre, you can now let for 25s. an acre: what follows? That the Catholic, who had his land but six years ago for the extremity of its value, has it now for one-fourth less than its value; therefore he must hold a very small quantity, who has not a profit to qualify him to vote. To give an instance of the operation of this rise: Suppose a Catholic held so small a quantity of land as ten acres at 20s. an acre, and that this was reckoned a rack-rent six years ago; from the rise of land since, he must have a profit from it of 50s. a year now. Consider further, that this increase of tillage and rise of land have principally been since Catholics were allowed to take freehold leases, and then consider how three provinces of this kingdom are covered with Catholics; and can you doubt of the multitude of Catholic voters, should you extend to them the 40s. franchise?

Again it is argued, that most of the landlords are Protestants, and that they will not be inclined to give freehold leases to the Catholics. But I ask, who can be certain that they will not? If however it is meant, that the Catholics will get but little influence by the 40s. franchise, then their gain is little. But if they should get great influence, then your danger is great. It is wise then to do what in the one alternative can do them little good, and what in the other may do you irreparable mischief? But it may be said, these extreme cases are improbable, and that the landlords will not all act one way, or all another. I will answer to this, that as far as they act in either way it applies: that is, the Catholic gains nothing as far as freehold is withheld, and you risk much as far as freehold is granted. And as most men are apt to prefer their own power to the public weal, especially where the interest of the public may not be immediately manifest, it follows, that landlords will rather follow the aggrandizement of their own power, than consider the danger to the state, and therefore will grant in freehold to the Catholics.

But further; in three provinces out of the four, the Catholics are six times the number of the Protestants. Now if you gave them the 40s. franchise, and if Catholics could obtain freeholds with the same facility as Protestants, the number of Catholic freeholders in these three provinces would be six times the number of Protestant freeholders. What a stupendous and overwhelming majority? Make then the amplest deduction probability will admit from this huge majority on account of Catholic poverty and Protestant landlords, and pride and prejudice and every thing else, and after all, what a great majority must remain to the Catholics? I therefore say, give them the 40s. franchise, and in these

three provinces they exceed you so much in their gross numbers, that they must exceed you in their votes. This appears to me as certain as that six is a greater number than one, or any other arithmetical axiom.

The next consideration is, whether being superior to you thus in number of votes, they would exercise this superiority to your exclusion? I ask then, which are the Protestants or the Catholics the more prejudiced? Perhaps you will say the Catholics; but I will suppose them to be equally so, and then I ask, if the Catholics were allowed to be representatives, but not electors, what chance could any Catholic candidate have in any county in the kingdom? None. If the Catholics then become the great majority of electors in any county, what chance can any Protestant candidate have in such county? None. Give then the 40s. franchise to the Catholics, and they will become the majority of electors in three provinces of this kingdom; and consequently will elect Catholic representatives for every county in these three provinces. Add a parliamentary reform to this, by throwing borough representation into the counties collectively or divisionally, and then you will have all Catholic representatives for these provinces, and most probably also for some of the counties even in the fourth, and thus the representatives of three provinces being Catholics, the great majority of the House of Commons will be Catholics; and all this only supposing the Catholics not to be a jot more prejudiced against you, than you must admit the Protestants to be against them. Is there any thing unreasonable then in this supposition?

If you say this cannot happen, for Catholics are to be excluded from sitting in Parliament, observe the consequence. The great objection to give the 40s. franchise to the Catholics rests upon this, that they would not give their suffrages indifferently as other electors, but that they would give them as a Catholic party, and to such representatives as would be, not the best representatives for the nation, but the best representatives for promoting the view of their party. Now the exclusion of Catholic representatives from sitting in Parliament, as well as every other remaining Catholic restriction instead of being a security against Catholics combining their suffrages, will be an additional inducement to them to do so; for the more points they have to gain, the more inducements they will have to enter into such combination. And even if you were certain, that they never would aspire to an ascendancy over you, as you have hitherto over them, still you must be certain, that they would aspire to an equality; and therefore combine to obtain it. But further, were they to associate to chuse representatives, do you think, they could long want candidates, even among Protestants, or nominal Protestants, fit for their purpose? Could they not easily get in every county enough of candidates, who would offer to take their tests, and promise to obey them,

and the first object of whose mission to Parliament would be to repeal those oaths, which you now take at that table, and admit the Catholics to sit here indiscriminately? Such would be the representatives of three provinces out of four, in the next parliament; what then would be the representatives in the Parliament the next after? Would they have even the name or semblance of Protestants?

Now what is there to control all this? Merely the power of their landlords. This is the reply in the mouth of every Catholic advocate, to every thing I have been stating. Now if this be true, what does it mean? Merely this: that if you give the 40s. franchise to the Catholics, the Protestant landlords will still, as before, return the representatives. Now what benefit is this to the Catholic body, to have the name of choosing their representatives, if still they are to be chosen, not by them, but by the Protestant landlords? What benefit is it to the constitution, if Catholics in name only, but the Protestant landlords in fact, continue as before to return the representatives?

If it is the same influence, that still returns, is not the dispute about a form, and not for a substance? Will the Catholics be more free by being the organs to express the will of their landlords, and not their own will? Or if, on the contrary, it would not be so; if the Catholics would think and act for themselves independent of their landlords, what then is the argument from the influence of their landlords, but a base deception to dupe and impose upon your credulity? and for which if you could be so duped, you would not be respected for your liberality, but laughed at by the whole world for your weakness, and you would deserve to be laughed at.

I do not expect of the House of Commons of Ireland, that it should be wiser than any assembly in the world, but, I only implore it, that it may not immortalize, itself for its folly. If you a Protestant House of Commons, mean to give up your power to the Catholics, do so; I shall acquiesce; but do it openly; it may be a magnanimous act, and take the credit for your magnanimity; avow it to the whole world: many and great heroes have resigned the ensigns of their authority, and sunk into the vale of private station; kings have laid down their sceptres; you may depose yourselves; do so; but say so, and let the world know, that you are not ignorant of what you are about, and that it is a work of your free volition, and not of a fatuitous ignorance and imbecility.

But to shew you the weakness of your situation, should you give the forty shillings franchise to the Catholics, and how much weaker it will be, than I have even yet stated it to be, consider this. The Catholics, I say, in every county in three provinces will unite, to choose representatives in their interest, in opposition to those in the Protestant interest, and this against the will of

their landlords. Now how, you will ask, can this be done? I will tell you. It is evident in the first place, that the Catholics will be then the majority of freeholders in three provinces out of the four; and that in any fair plan of reform being the majority of freeholders if they act together, they must return the representatives for these three provinces. That if they do this, they get a majority in the House of Commons, and a majority of the House of Commons, in our constitution, we know, is every thing: that is, a majority of the House of Commons has the controul over the supplies, and the supplies gives them a controul over other powers in the state. Here then is the prize to tempt the Catholics to unite in their suffrages, all the wealth and all the power in the land. Will this produce no exertion? Will this make no men; or will it not make multitudes of men among them, active and intriguing? What then are men to do? Merely to tell them this, merely to tell them their situation, and say to them, "you are now the majority of electors, and you may therefore return the majority of the House of Commons; and if you do so, the Catholic interest is omnipotent: we only ask you to do what you did the other day; to meet in your chapels and determine, who should be the representatives of every county or district as the reform may be." They may say, "your landlords will want you to vote otherwise, but unite together this once, and we will soon put you out of the power of your landlords. They may tell them that by their uniting thus in the last summer to chuse representatives to the convention, you got relieved from the hearth-money tax, and even got this very benefit of voting, which we now call on you to exercise;" and from thence they may persuade them, that if they unite again in the same way to chuse their representatives to Parliament, they may be sure of obtaining still much greater benefits.

They may talk to them of tithes, and even of rents, and at last proceed to talk to them of religion, and tell them, "if you will unite in your suffrages, your ancient religion, which has been prostrated in the dust, for a century, and humiliated and reviled, may once more rear its head, and appear in all its prestine magnificence, and after the wrongs of a century you may now do an act of great justice to your priests, your altars and your God, which shall shower down wealth and power upon you in this world, and eternal glory in the next."

What influence could a landlord use to countervail this? Yet, all this, and much more, might be done to make them co-operate in their suffrages. Will you then, after this, will you transfer such a power to men who are subject to such an influence? Will you be your own executioners, and commit this desperate suicide?

Neither is it merely a surrender of power; you cannot tell what use would be made of that power by those to whom you would

surrender it. One party thinks the Catholics are friends to high kingly government, and would therefore make them a counterpoise to the levellers; another party thinks they have caught the flame of French politics, and would co-operate with them in their democratical speculations. But the truth is, that no man knows, nor can any man make a well-founded conjecture, what would be the conduct of such a body of representatives; nor even can they know individually, what they might do themselves, when they should be thus collected: whether they might not sink into servile compliance to preserve the ascendancy which they had thus obtained, or whether they might not spread their depredations into all the widest excesses of democratic licentiousness.

Is all this to be risked? Are we, living under the best constitution that wisdom or accident has yet conferred upon man; in one of the finest islands, and in a state, but the other day of the most rapid prosperity; are we to risk all this? And for what? In order to give a liberty to the lower Catholics; and which if they had, their best friends tell you, they would only exercise as slaves to their landlords. Insanity!

See then the chain. Give the Catholics the 40s. franchise, and they will be the majority of electors; being the majority of electors, they will return the majority of the House of Commons: the majority of the House of Commons so returned will have the controul over the supplies, and the controul over the supplies will give them the controul over every thing. Could any demonstrative series be more certain and consecutive than this? Who is there that can deny a proposition of it? But to go on; suppose that having thus got a majority of the House of Commons, they should chuse to have an ascendancy in their turn, what could you do? Suppose they stopped the supplies until they modelled the army, or modelled the peerage, what could you do? Suppose they proceeded to acts of intollorance against you, as you did against them, following your own example, what could you do? Are Protestants willing to submit to all this? Are the Dissenters willing to submit to it? Is this the improvement in the constitution, which they have been struggling for? It is not to put themselves up, but to put the Catholics up, and themselves down for ever? The Dissenters I always respected as a most wise people. I fear some mist stands before them at this instant, and that they do not see their way; I trust, however, that you will see your way, and the gulph that is prepared for you.

Again it is asked, "will the Catholics be content with a limited franchise?" But I say it is not what will content them, but what ought to content them, that we ought to consider. I am willing to give them every thing, except what will terminate in our own destruction. In some things I would rather go even further than the bill; though in the franchise I would not go so far. This misfortune is, that the right honourable gentleman,

who has negociated it, does not understand the internal state of the country, and is ignorant of its interests. In England such a liberty of franchise might be of little consequence, not merely from the paucity of Catholics there, but from the nature of tenures.

The right honourable gentleman knows that in England (for I suppose him not to be so much unacquainted with that country) that there, I say, the lands are mostly let from year to year, or for seven years—or sometimes fourteen years, or sometimes and more rarely, for twenty-one years, but that leases for lives are seldom granted. Consequently the rabble of the people there cannot obtain freehold property—nay, a great majority of the middle classes cannot obtain it. I have heard it stated by a very accurate and well informed man, that the number of county electors in England was but 100,000. I know not whether this be the fact, but certainly the number is but very small.

Here the tenures are quite different; almost all the lands of the country are let for lives; so that almost every peasant, has a freehold tenure, and if not disqualified by religion, has a vote. See then the effect of this upon the present question; all the Catholic peasantry will be admitted to vote. What a rabble will this let into the constitution! I am not objecting to them now as Catholics. If they were Protestants I would never vote for an infusion into the constitution of such a multitudinous rabble. If they were all Protestants, I say, for fifty generations back, I would not consent to the overwhelming of the constitution by such a torrent. In some counties where there are but 2,000 electors now, you will, if this bill passes, have 10,000; in others 20,000, in others 30,000, and I am well informed in the county of Cork alone you will have 50,000; that is, half what I have stated the whole elective body to be of all the counties in England.

What will be the consequence of this? But that your county elections will be carried by the vilest corruption, by force, by riot, by bloodshed; and that, not merit, but money and outrage, will nominate the candidate? Do you think you will meliorate the constitution by admitting into it such a copious adulteration of rabble as this? I do not desire you now to consider them as differing from you in religion, but merely their poverty, their numbers, their ignorance, their barbarous ignorance, many of them not being able to speak even our language, and then think, whether giving them this franchise will be an improvement in the constitution; or whether it will not be a most pernicious vitiation of it? The county representation is now reckoned the sound part of the constitution; but where will be its soundness with such a constituency? I repeat it again; put religion for an instant out of your consideration; suppose them all Protestants, and yet should such a multitude be invested with such a power? I have often heard the servility and venality of 40s. freeholders com-

plained of; that they were in general driven to elections by their landlords, or seduced against them by bribes. Still however being confined to Protestants their number was too few to be formidable, and they gave a certain portion of popularity to our elections, not perhaps without its advantage; still however they were much objected to. But what will be the state of things now, when in three provinces, the number of these voters will be increased five or six fold without any proportional accession of freeholders of property to countervail them.

Now I say the inferior Catholics will be content without this, if they are not infligated by the superior ones, and even if they were discontented, they could be easily kept down. Have they not been kept down hitherto? Is any gentlemen in the counties, where they are the most numerous, afraid of them? No. Have not the juries and the public meetings in those counties entered into resolutions, but the other day, against giving the Catholics any franchise? And do you think they would do so, if they thought it would be dangerous to with-hold it? Or who can be so good judges whether it would be dangerous or no? If then in the opinion of those men, it would not be dangerous to with-hold from them all franchise, surely there can be no danger in with-holding from them some franchise, and that too from their very lowest orders?

The Catholics may be considered as divided into three classes: The first, who aspire to seats in Parliament. The second, who are of the middle class of 20*l.* a year freehold property and upwards. And the lower class, of whom I have been speaking.

As to the middle class, so far from considering it as an offensive limitation to them, to with-hold franchise from the lower orders, I am of opinion, that most of them would be better pleased it should be so with-held. Every information I have been able to procure from those counties, where they most abound, confirms me in this sentiment. But further, I know it is the nature of man to love distinction and pre-eminence. I seldom knew a Protestant 10*l.* freeholder who did not wish that Protestant 40*s.* freeholders should not vote; and for the same reason I am persuaded the middle Catholics will be better pleased, that the inferior ones should not have votes.

Again, the first class of Catholics might be as much, or more gratified, by being rendered eligible to Parliament; and what danger should we run from this? None, if you keep the main part of the constituency Protestant; for no number of any consequence will then be able to avail themselves of this liberty. And I am sure it would be a much more gratifying favour to the Catholics, and more liberal on your part; why not do so then? Is it a false and narrow pride? For my part I feel no such sentiment towards the Catholics. I should not be sorry to see

a respectable Catholic sitting here on my right hand, and another on my left, provided that by keeping the strength of the constituency Protestant, we did not endanger ourselves, by the admission of too many of them: a Catholic House of Commons will never spring out of a Protestant root. But if the root be Catholic, no man can be sure how long the stem and branches will continue Protestant.

What will follow next from this unlimited franchise? A parliamentary reform; a most extensive and probably a most levelling parliamentary reform. For make the Catholics the great majority of the electors of the kingdom, and do you think that they would be satisfied at the boroughs remaining as they are in the possession of Protestants? No. But the very day after you grant them these privileges, they will be ripe for joining with the North in the demand for a reform.

Has the right honourable gentleman said, that they will be satisfied with what he has now proposed? Have they made any such declaration to him? No; or if they did, how far would this be binding? It might be binding upon the few individuals that made it, but not upon the great body of the Catholics. Those individuals, if they persevered, would be soon disclaimed by the Catholics, as Lord Kenmare and his friends were, who were for resting satisfied with what was done in the last session.

What is the language in the North? "Let us give the Catholics franchise, that they may join with us in obtaining reform." They know that the Catholics are not such fools as not to join, and obtain it, if they can, when by obtaining it, they also obtain the nomination of three-fourths of the members of the House of Commons; that is, they obtain every thing. I say then, they will join in obtaining the reform; but what kind of reform? Certainly the most levelling; for being greatly superior in numbers, and greatly inferior in property, (not having above one-fiftieth of the property of the kingdom) they will find it their interest to support that reform, which will give most weight to numbers, not to property; that is, the reform, which will be most democratic and levelling. And then I ask, if they thus unite, can you resist them? If you fear them, before they get the powers in this bill, shall you not have more reason to fear them afterwards?

If the English minister at this crisis fears the Catholics alone, do you think he should not fear the Catholics, and Dissenters, and the greater part of the Protestants of the country all united? And will not this reform be the bond of their union? No man is so weak as to think, that it was liberality in the English minister, which made him accede to these concessions to the Catholics, and risk the monstrous experiment of admitting three millions of people into the heart of the constitution, who had hitherto been excluded from it.

What follows? That if fear has made him concede so much to the Catholics alone, what must he not concede to the Catholics and Dissenters united, together with much the greater part of the Protestants. Therefore this extensive franchise, instead of making the Catholics contented, and preventing them from uniting with the Dissenters, is the very measure which will force the union, because it is the very measure which will make it the interest of the Catholics to press for a reform, and how few here who do not know how interest over-rules the actions of men?

Some I know will object to what I have been stating, and say, that I am shewing to the Catholics what they may do, and how they may do it. But do you believe the Catholics to be such weak and simple men, as that they cannot discover their own strength and their own interests without my instruction? Has the right honourable member found them so in his negotiation, or has he not found them the very reverse? But I say, I will not sit silent here, when it is proposed to you, and proposed by a person in that station which has always so much influence upon you, to do an act, which will soon depose you from your pre-eminence, and put you down for ever; and when you too seem to be deliberating under the transitory influences of office, and station, and fear—base fear, whether or no you will do it.

In short, there never was a measure pretending to be a great one, more narrowly conceived than the present bill: It courts the Catholic rabble, and insults the Catholic gentry. It gives power to those who are ignorant, and therefore dangerous, and with-holds it from those who are enlightened, and therefore safe. It gives equal powers with the Protestants to the lower class of Catholics, who are the most numerous, and thereby gives them a superiority: and it does not give equal powers to the upper class, who are less numerous than you, and who could therefore have had no superiority; that is, it does the very reverse of what it ought to do.

The next measure I would recommend is, the incorporation of the Catholic franchise with parliamentary reform. The elective franchise is the great object of the Catholics, for though they desire other things, they say, without this they are not freemen, but slaves. Esteeming it then so, this must be the paramount consideration with them, and in comparison of which, every thing else they desire must be as nothing. I there confine myself at present to the consideration of this. I say then, I would have the Catholic franchise included in the bill for parliamentary reform. Extension of franchise is properly a subject of such reform. The other Catholic measures I think should be the subject of a separate bill.

Now I ask, what is the objection against uniting these measures, for the Catholic franchise being a measure of representation, and the reform being a measure of representation, the union

of them is obvious? What then is the objection to uniting them? Now, there are but two objections, one that it might risk the Catholic question—the other, that it would delay it. Now as to the objection on account of delay, I see no sense in this. If we were on the eve of a general election, there would be some reason for expedition, and the Catholics might be anxious to get a power, which they were immediately to exercise; but there is no general election pendent. As the Catholics then could have no opportunity for the immediate exercise of the franchise, if it were granted them, what reason can there be for precipitancy? Or is it the risk you fear, least the reform being associated within the Catholic question, should sink both? Now what is it I ask has ensured the measure of the Catholics? Is it not the crisis? And why? Because in this time of popular fermentation the minister deemed it wise to conciliate so great a body of the people. What follows? That if he deemed it prudent at this time to conciliate a part of the people, he will deem it the height of imprudence to irritate the whole of the people. And will he not do so, if we unite these measures, and he should advise the crown to reject them? Unite then the nation, I say, by uniting these measures, and proceed boldly and fearlessly like men in the great cause of a great and united people.

But sever these measures, and what is the consequence? The minister will think that he has gratified so great a part of the people by the Catholic measure, that he may venture to controul the rest; and under this delusion he may crush the reform. And what a multitude of mischiefs the rejection of the reform would produce, after public expectation has been so much excited upon it, it is for you to consider. Or if you say “that the Catholics having got franchise would join in calling for reform,” true; but what would the minister think? That the Catholics, having obtained so much, would abate much in their fervour; and he would hope, after he had drawn off by the Catholic bill so great a portion of popular discontent, that he might venture for a while to leave the rest to ferment, resolving however at his leisure, to put a heavy curb on your future exertions.

Whether the Catholics would object to the union of these measures, lest it should endanger their enfranchisement, I know not. But upon what principle is it, I ask, that they expect this enfranchisement? Is it not that old prejudices have ceased, and that we are but one people united together, with but one interest animating the whole? Can they then hesitate, if they are sincere, to combine their fate with ours? Are we to give them every thing, and will they risk for us nothing? I entertain no such sentiment of them. I cannot believe of them any thing so selfish and unworthy. Their advocates say, let them get franchise, and they will afterwards co-operate with the Protestants, in obtaining reform. Admit they will; but why should our cause be

the lacquey walking after theirs, or why should they not go arm in arm together? I do not ask precedence for the Protestant or the Dissenter, neither do I wish to give precedence to the Catholic before them both. The Catholics have been assisted on this occasion by many Protestants and many Dissenters, will then the Catholics, neglecting their Protestant and Dissenting auxiliaries, insist on a separate treaty for themselves, at this critical juncture? But to whom am I addressing myself? Not to a Catholic but a Protestant House of Commons; and therefore though it might be a prudent, though not a generous, policy in the Catholics to prefer the cause of the Protestants to theirs, yet I trust they will not submit to do so. See now what you gain by one combination of these measures. Should a minister say, let us divide the people of Ireland. Let us gratify a part and disappoint a part, by uniting the measures you defeat this ruinous policy. You force him either to reject all, which he dare not, or to admit all, and thus all parties succeed. You join the reform with a measure already recommended from the throne, and thereby obtain for it a passport at the throne. You conciliate the minds of many Protestants to the Catholic franchise, by thus embodying it with an act in favour of their own freedom; and you at once excite the whole people of Ireland, from its shores to its center, in an universal demand for this great charter of public liberty.

I would therefore begin, by giving but a limited franchise to the Catholics; and by making but a moderate reform; and I would unite these measures. A sudden communication of power to a great body of people is never wise. Changes in an ancient constitution ought to be gradual. The example of France should be an awful admonition to us. Let us at this anomalous era secure as much benefit for our country as we can, but let us encounter as little danger. If a cloud fraught with lightnings is moving over our heads, what ought we to do? We ought to draw off silently and imperceptibly if we can, and not excite a sudden explosion.

Again, by uniting these measures, let no man think that it is my design thereby to defeat Catholic franchise. Those who know me, know that I am incapable of combating any measure in an insidious and sinister way; whatever I oppose I have always, and will always, oppose openly. I fear no man or body of men. Whatever I think can be safely granted to the Catholics, I will grant; whatever I think cannot, I will endeavour to withhold, and I will say so. If the illiberal reprobation of that body of men, towards whom my heart has never cherished an illiberal sentiment, was to follow, I should regret it, yet would I speak, and I would act in the manner I thought right. If I did not, I should not think myself worthy to sit among you: I am satisfied that you would despise me; that the Catholics ought at least to despise me; and what would be worse, and to

my mind insupportable, I should despise myself. But I fear not the censure of the Catholics.

Every respectable and candid man among them, at least when the fever of the present instant is past, will respect me for speaking my sentiments boldly; and as for those who are not respectable and candid, I am not anxious about their esteem. Truth and reason are my only guides, and I would not swerve from these, though the wealth of the two hemispheres was to reward me for voting on one side, and death awaited me at your threshold for voting on the other.

The reason I should combine these measures is not to defeat Catholic franchise, but to secure parliamentary reform. Suppose the reform should pass this House, are you in no danger of losing it after? Have you never lost a measure after it had passed this House? What became of the pension-bill? Did it not pass here, and yet did it ever pass into a law? What became of the mutiny bill? The mutiny bill was passed as a kind of charter for your freedom, and was it not converted into the very reverse? There is no such power in England of altering your bills, but there is of suppressing bills. Witness the cordage bill; did it not pass both our houses, yet who has ever heard of it since? If the reform passes this House, can you be sure that it will pass the other House? Or if it does, can you be sure that it will not expire on the steps of the throne? that it will not be trodden under foot by a dark and clandestine negative; (one of the anomalies of our constitution); though no viceroy might be prevailed upon to give it a negative publicly and openly?

The heart of the Catholics is now in the franchise; I would therefore put it into the body of the reform; and make the minister feel how it palpitated for success, that he might tremble at its frustration. My heart is in the measure too, and if every impulse of my reason did not tell me it was wise, I should not press it upon you. Credulity has always been the bane of Ireland. Generous and sanguine, we take the first glimpse of success for the sober light of certainty. A reform is no sooner named, than every eye sees it enrolled. But if the friends of it are sanguine, the foes of it are cold and machinating, and you may be baffled at the very instant, that you are wrapt in visions of success. I therefore exhort you, to neglect no human means of strengthening it; move it discreetly, but rapidly, forward. Put Catholic franchise into its bosom, and let it move on to the lords and to the throne, followed by the votive acclamations of the whole people.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE. I do not rise to answer the multiplicity of matter the honourable member has, on the Catholic bill, stated to the House. The whole, Sir, is very finely confused, and very alarming, and really above my recollection or

powers of answering; but I shall make a short observation on the only part of it that interells me, the evils with which the honourable member has threatened Parliament, if they shall, pursuant to the bill of the minister, grant an unlimited franchise to the Catholics, and fortunately there was an experience in the country that would be the best reply to him. In the reign of Elizabeth, and afterwards of Charles the Second, when the Catholics had both the property and power of the kingdom, were electors and members of your Parliament, severe penal laws passed against them, such was the ascendancy of Protestant government and connection with a Protestant country. In the reign of William, when they were members of Parliament, they were by laws disarmed and deprived of many rights. In the reign of Anne, by acts of the second and eighth of that reign, a parliament, elected by Roman Catholics, passed a code of laws, proscribing absolutely the whole Catholic people. Penalties that I do not now recollect were confirmed by acts of parliament of George the First, also elected by Roman Catholics. And lastly, this very root of property that is to produce a stem to make us all Papists, in the reign of George the Second, produced a stem of representation that destroyed the root itself.

By an act of the first of George the Second, the power of voting at elections was taken from Catholics, which I think is some proof that it had not at least power to preserve itself. I trust those facts will be some kind of alleviation of the honourable member's fears on the subject of the bill passing into a law. Every penal law that has been enacted against Catholics was passed by parliaments elected by Catholics. Property and power, let me assure the honourable member, has, and ever would have, material controuling power.

Major DOYLE. I shall defer debating the bill until the proper stage for discussing its merits; but I merely rise to give notice, that as I think it fell short of what was due to the acknowledged loyalty of the Catholics, I intend to introduce a clause or clauses, which shall tend more fully to gratify the wishes of that body, and at the same time obviate the fears or supposed fears of those, who, from ill-founded apprehensions, are adverse to their emancipation. I call upon the right honourable Secretary, for the sake of his character as a public man, to resist the advice of the honourable baronet, that of implicating the Catholic question with that of reform, as the one must necessarily injure materially the other.

I hope, Sir, the honourable member was not founded in supposing the Catholics owed the present favourable sentiments towards them, merely to the *crisis*, and not to their peaceable and loyal conduct; but if it were so, the linking them to the reform must prove ruinous to their cause, for it was known that

a length of time must necessarily be taken up on the subject of reform, from the variety of opinions relative to that question, before which the crisis on which their cause is said to depend, will probably have passed over. Combining their cause with that of reform, will also, Sir, have the effect, of uniting amongst their claim, all who were adverse to parliamentary reform. As to the objection, if they had got the franchise they would vote for those who befriended them; I think they would be very extraordinary men indeed, if they did not prefer those who were their friends to those whom they conceived hostile to their wishes. It had been said, that all clauses still left in the bill, operative against them, would be so many inducements to them to unite against the Protestants to get rid of them: if this be so, it is an additional reason for agreeing to my idea, of not leaving one offensive clause against them in the bill.

I shall defer offering specific clauses until the proper stage of the bill; but they go to do away such oaths as at present stand in the way of the Catholic, being on a footing of perfect equality with their Protestant brethren, and substituting an oath for the security of the possession of property derived under the act of settlement. This I do not do from thinking it the least necessary, but that no argument of danger, even the most childish, should remain against their total emancipation.

Mr. MAXWELL. Sir, I desire to know whether the Roman Catholic business is to be hurried through the House before the assizes? Or whether a reasonable time will be allowed to gentlemen who still retain some regard to the Protestant interest, to consider a business of such great magnitude, and to consult their constituents on it?

Mr. Secretary HOBART. I trust, Sir, no man will suppose that I could be so indecent as to say that the business should be hurried, but I hope it will be concluded before the assizes.

Mr. GEORGE OGLE. I hope the right honourable gentleman will not insist upon Friday next for the second reading of the bill. I entreat that he will reflect upon the importance of the subject. Surely no question of this magnitude was ever so hurried through an house of parliament; it is this day read a first time, in two days more it will appear in print, and then in two days more we are to read for the second time.

Would it not be decent, would it not be respectful, to the Protestants of Ireland, who sent us here, who entrusted their rights and liberties in our hands, to consult them upon what we are about to do? Will gentlemen recollect that they are but the trustees of the Protestants of Ireland; that this is a bold measure indeed, and a measure which I do not think them warranted to take without the consent of their constituents.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE. If the parliament of King William, if the parliament of Queen Anne, had a right to deprive the Roman Catholics of their franchises, we surely have a right to say, "return to the enjoyment of your inheritance, to the possession of your franchise;" by whatever right they could deprive, by the same right we can restore.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD. I desire that the right honourable gentleman will explain himself. He says we have a right to say, "return to your inheritance." Does he mean by this inheritance, the forfeited estates?

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE. Sir, the honourable member entirely mistakes me; I meant only political rights and franchise, no estates.

Doctor BROWNE. Sir, not only lawyers, but what is of much more importance, country gentlemen, will be obliged to leave town to attend on the assizes, and therefore the bill ought to be postponed. I must complain of the low trick admitted to be practised on us, if that the managers of the bill delayed it to the eve of the assizes, and just at the time it was impossible for gentlemen to attend to it, they are anxious to hurry it through the House.

Doctor DUIGENAN. The right honourable baronet certainly did use the word *inheritance*, which he afterwards applied to political rights: he seems to think that those rights, though the exercise of them had been suspended for fifty years, may still be considered as an inheritance; but he scorns the idea of receiving any claim to estates that have been forfeited above an hundred years. I will tell the right honourable baronet, that the same authority which declared their estates forfeited, did also deprive the Roman Catholics of political power; and he might as well call the forfeited estates their inheritance, as call the elective franchise by that name.

I assure the right honourable baronet, they will think length of possession no bar to their claims; they did not think it any in the reign of James the Second. What was the first act of his Popish parliament that met in Dublin? It was an act of resumption of all the estates forfeited by Papists in the rebellion of 1641: and if they then reassumed their estates, I cannot see why they may not do the same again, whenever the Parliament shall be sufficiently Popish. I therefore think the observation of the honourable member [Mr. John Claudius Beresford] very strong and very seasonably made.

I think it is a very odd and a very indecent manœuvre to press this business forward thus on the eve of the assizes, without al-

lowing time to expose its pernicious tendency. Sir, the House, instead of two days, should have at least a fortnight, to consider this business; to precipitate it, is to treat the Protestants with the utmost contempt.

Mr. Secretary HOBART. When I first introduced the subject of the bill, Sir, I fully explained its scope and intention. Of this the House and the nation were perfectly apprized. The argument, therefore, that I desire to precipitate the measure, and that further time should be given to consider it, must fall to the ground, when these circumstances were recollected.

Mr. JAMES CUFFE. It is, Sir, extremely unjust to charge the right honourable gentleman with indecency or precipitation. The gentlemen on the other side have repeatedly called on him for the bill, and even seemed to think him tardy: but now it was brought forward, he is reproached with indecent precipitancy. Surely there never was a man in his station that less deserved such a censure, never one who conducted himself with such perfect respect and politeness towards that House and its individual members.

Mr. EGAN. Sir, I am persuaded that the Roman Catholics, however anxious they might be for the fate of the bill, would yet not wish to receive a boon which seemed to be the offspring of precipitancy, or the little measure of party, nor suffer themselves to be betrayed into a refractory impatience. They were now fully aware of the disposition of the House, and of his majesty's ministers; nor should their emancipation even be postponed, I am certain their loyalty, their prudence, or their patience, were not to be shaken by the event. I hope, however, that Government are really serious in the objects of the bill, and that the measure of postponing the committal of it was not a trick to throw the advocates of the bill off their guard, and lead them to distant parts of the country.

The question was at length put, that the bill be read a second time on Friday next, and carried without a division.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1793.

The House, according to order, went up to the Castle with the address, &c. When the Speaker resumed the chair,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER presented several of the ordinary money bills; which were severally read a first time.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL brought in a bill for constituting a parish under the name of Saint George's; which was also read a first time.

The bounty regulation—the mutiny and the Kilkenny road bills, were severally read a third time, and passed.

Mr. FORBES moved, “ That the clerks of the peace, and other returning officers in the several boroughs throughout the kingdom, do lay before this House on or before this day fortnight, lists of the electors in their respective boroughs, with the respective qualifications on which they exercised the elective franchise.”

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE said, that when a few days ago a proposition similar to the present had been offered to that House, he opposed it; as the information it would produce must be imperfect; as it might, in its effects be injurious to the parties concerned; as it was utterly useless for the purposes it professed, and in its inference and operation could not but prove detrimental to the public: that on the same grounds he should oppose the present motion, as being liable to the same objections; that the information to be derived from it must be imperfect, no man could doubt who considered, that in many instances the corporation books did not contain a list of the respective voters; as besides those entered in the books, several were intitled to freedom by birth, service or marriage; several became electors by freehold or residence, or docketts, as the case may be; which, as they are always variable, are not cognizable by the town clerk or other officer. That laying before Parliament the corporation books, or returns of the state of every borough in Ireland, must be extremely injurious; it would be a sort of Parliament *quo warranto* against the boroughs; it would expose lapses and omissions, and produce pernicious litigation. That the measure was utterly useless as to the purpose professed; that parliamentary reform was a measure not to be grounded on arithmetical calculation, but on general acknowledged principles; that every body knew there were boroughs that contained few constituents; every body knew that the people are not equally represented; that they never were so, and that no man in the House would wish to make them so; for if it were so, we should not have the blessings of the British constitution, but the scourge of a democracy. However that our constitution was to be viewed not in the detail, but in its effects; that there were fashions growing of political, as well as religious free-thinking, which affected to philosophize every thing to abstract principles; that as one led to atheism, so did the other to anarchy. That both religion and government

were to be judged by their general effects; that a religion which produces charity, integrity, peace and good will towards men, is a good religion. That a government which maintains civil liberty and produces progressive prosperity is a good government. That we should judge of governments, as we do of the powers above, by the blessings they have conferred upon us. He said, that the interference conveyed by such returns as had been moved for, would be highly injurious, as they would detail defects, without producing remedies; and at all events depreciate Parliament in the popular opinion; you decide what you have to be bad, before you know whether you can make it better; you bid the people be discontented with their present constitution, before you decide what you can substitute in its place; you shake the pillars of ancient establishment, and disturb the tranquillity of the public mind, before you have considered what you shall do to restore the one or satisfy the other. Therefore, he said, the amendment of his right honourable friend [the Chancellor of the Exchequer] the other night, to a motion detailing the infirmities of our present constitution, was a wise one; for it went to maintain unimpaired the authority of Parliament under its present constitution; which, formed as it may be, is the only source of law and of government, and in order that it should be obeyed it ought to be respected, and that it should be respected it was only necessary to recall the recollection of the people to the series of benefits it had conferred in a few years; however, if a plan were produced that might effect any improvement, without hazarding what we enjoy, it ought to be considered; the appointment of this committee had been so often alluded to, with inferences and conclusions that did not belong to it, that he would remind the House how it had been formed; a committee was moved for to enquire "if any, and what abuses, had arisen in Government or in the representation of the people." It was objected to as implying the existence of abuses that were not admitted; the motion was simplified to get rid of that implication, and a committee of inquiry, passed almost as a thing of course; but to suppose that in agreeing to this committee, the House was pledged to admit the reality of abuses, which may not exist, or to adopt a plan of remedy they had never seen, was a most unfounded conclusion indeed. Gentlemen have asked for what was this committee appointed, if you refuse them information? He said, the gentleman who moved for it could best answer that question; he saw no good end it could answer; that, if it went to pledge gentlemen to a reform, the scheme of which they had never seen, or to depreciate the present representation in the eyes of the people, it would be both injurious and unjust. But we are called on at this side of the House, "to shew the sincerity of our wishes for parliamentary reform;" the fact is, that men must have expressed those wishes,

before you have a right to demand that they should prove the sincerity of them; as it is, you call on us to fulfil covenants we never entered into, and adhere to engagements we never made; some individuals expressed sentiments favourable to reform; but the general sentiment went to discussion, and no more. He said, that he had no reserve in saying that it was his private opinion, our constitution, under the present mode of representation, was competent to all good ends of Government, to civil liberty and progressive prosperity; and he doubted much whether human wisdom was able to form a plan of alteration that would not be productive of more evils than those it would affect to remove; however it was his duty to consider the plan promised, when the bill should be produced. But in the mean time let us not do any thing to depreciate the present constitution of Parliament; for if you once detach the public mind from its devotion to ancient establishments, you set it adrift without pointing out an harbour or furnishing an anchor; you remove the landmarks of the old constitution, you level the old boundaries between Government and the people, which are like those between the sea and the land.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE. Sir, this is the critical period, in which every loyal subject should declare his sentiments in the boldest and most public manner, and express his disapprobation of any measure that may be conceived to be an encouragement to the propagation of French principles; and as I consider a parliamentary reform to have that direct tendency, I openly enter my protest against it.

I consider it as a masked battery, under the protection and covert of which the Dungannon reformers, the society called United Irishmen, the Defenders and Break-of-day Boys, are advancing to the foot of the glacis of the citadel of the constitution, there to make a lodgment, and the garrison is called upon to defend itself.

I am very glad, however, that this subject has been opened in the committee, that the public may see the futility and wickedness of it. This is the third or fourth night we have sat upon it, and I ask whether the reformers have brought forth any plan, which the greatest madman amongst us would agree to?

La Fayette was a great reformer; he and his party (amongst whom were many of the principal nobility of France) began with the abuses of the monarchy. As they proceeded, the epidemic madness seized them, and they thought it necessary to sacrifice to public clamour their immunities, their honours, their seniorities, which, in fact, to them were their boroughs, handed down to them by their ancestors. Whilst they were thus going on, reforming themselves and the state, there was a bloody jaco-

bin party observing their motions, and took the first opportunity of jumping on their necks, cutting their throats, and of burying them, the monarchy and the monarch in the same grave.

It seems as if the same spirit of *felo de se* had seized on us also ! We have had some time to consider ; let us endeavour to shake off the frenzy and recover from the illusion. Let us direct our attention to the strengthening our army ; let us establish our militia, as the natural bulwark of the country ; and let us follow the example of our sister kingdom, in providing defence against the arms and doctrines of France.

Under all these circumstances, I intreat the gentlemen who have introduced this question into the House, to withdraw it, at least for the present.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said he would, in a few words, confine himself to the question before the House. It was not whether they should have a reform of the Parliament, nor would it pledge any man upon that subject. He had never pledged himself one way or other. He had always said, that he would give the matter his best consideration, and vote as his conscience should suggest to be for the service of the country, and the benefit of the constitution.

He was clear that this motion ought to be negatived, because it would not produce the desired information. No officer could possibly give it, and it would ill become Parliament to put an order of that nature upon the journals. Besides, the information desired was unnecessary. For if the fact was to have ascertained that there were many boroughs with a small number of electors, it would not be denied. There was also another objection to the motion ; it would be exposing those boroughs and might furnish matter of litigation, and might, probably, be the cause of some of them being overthrown by a *quo warranto*. On the whole, he was convinced that much mischief might arise from agreeing to the motion made by the honourable gentleman, and he should therefore oppose it.

Mr. CONOLLY said, that the business of a parliamentary reform arises from what was recommended from the throne. In the speech from the throne, alteration is recommended, and the subject of a parliamentary reform, which he had thrown out at the commencement of the session, was in consequence of that alteration. For his part, he did not urge the committee appointed to inquire into the state of the representation of the people, as he wished that the Catholic question should precede that of a parliamentary reform. He said, that he should support the motion of his honourable friend ; and he declared that he would never rest satisfied, till the people are satisfied, and that they have a fair, equal and unequivocal representation.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE opposed the motion, as going to discredit the legislature. The motion was, that the proper officers should bring all the books of the several corporations in the kingdom, and lay them on the table. No doubt, in the lapse of time, and from having fallen into improper hands, many boroughs might have neglected to comply with the terms upon which their charters were granted. The people seeing the defects, might be induced to say this system is bad, and adopt a new one, with nothing to recommend it but its novelty. In England, such a measure as this would be thought a step for bringing *quo warrantos* against all the corporations in the kingdom.

If ever there was a time in which it became necessary to conceal the defects of the constitution, it was the present. In England, when reform was equally desired, Parliament had done so, and by rallying round the crown, had saved the country. If, then, there was danger in agitating the question in Great Britain, there must be much more in this country. Her credit was not much affected by a war, whereas it would nearly annihilate ours. If a reform was pressed on the House, a better system than the present should at least be brought forward; he admitted that it would be impossible to prepare a plan which should please all parties; but let a better than the present be produced, and it would be entitled to their consideration.

Mr FORBES said, he had entertained an hope that the right honourable baronet, would have been suffered to indulge in a solitary opposition to his motion, but he now observed with concern, that he was to be supported by all the force of Administration, who had appointed that right honourable baronet, to be the vehicle for conveying to the people the determination of ministers, to extinguish the measure of parliamentary reform in the House this session; for such undoubtedly would be the construction put by their constituents on the resistance of the servants of Government to the present motion. The right honourable baronet has said, that ministers by consenting to a committee to enquire into the state of the representation, had not pledged themselves to support the principles of a parliamentary reform; I answer, that if they act consistently with themselves, they certainly had pledged themselves: he then reminded the right honourable baronet of the argument repeatedly relied on by him and his friends, when the measure of a committee to enquire into the sale of peerages was proposed; that if they yielded on this subject they should admit that such corrupt practices really obtained, again on the motion to appoint a committee to enquire into the laws, which existed relative to the East India trade, it was contended in like manner by the right honourable baronet and his friends, that it would be inferred from

their consent to such an enquiry, that they pledged themselves to the principle of the expediency and utility of such a trade. He called the attention of the House to the circumstances, in which the committee relative to parliamentary reform had originated; a mode of proceeding on this subject had been prescribed, in effect, to the House by the gentlemen who sat on the same side with the right honourable baronet; a motion for a committee to enquire into the state of the representation, had been made by an honourable member possessing a considerable office under Government, which received the sanction of the ostensible minister.

In the last week, a right honourable friend of his [Mr. Grattan] had submitted to that committee, some resolutions tending to establish certain facts relative to the defects in the representation so notorious, as to come within the knowledge of almost every man in the kingdom; of which no member, who had served on an election committee, could have been ignorant. But my right honourable friend was told by gentlemen on the other side of the House, that we must resolve on facts, before we inquire; that he was anticipating the business of the committee, and usurping its functions. In compliance with this suggestion, we now wish to proceed on the inquiry, and for that purpose move for the production of such materials and evidence, as may enable the committee to examine into the constituent parts of the representation; this is also resisted. And at the same time we are told in effect—you may inquire, but we will give you nothing to inquire into; and we will use every means in our power to prevent the result of your inquiry from being productive of information to the House, or benefit to the people: this was an evasion on the part of Administration, that would disgrace even the most miserable pettifogger in the Four Courts. He asked, was this a proper reception to give to a question so intimately connected with the wishes and the interests of the people? Was this the mode adopted to effectuate the benevolent and gracious recommendation of his Majesty, for devising such measures as might unite all descriptions of people: conscious as ministry were of their own unpopularity, it appeared to him that they were industrious to aggravate their own misfortunes; they seemed desirous to precipitate the country into some crisis, which they had, particularly, in contemplation, or to make an experiment of the practicability of governing Ireland under the universal distrust and detestation of the people; which must certainly prevail by affording such proofs, as their conduct exhibited this night, of hostility to parliamentary reform.

He observed, that though the right honourable baronet, he was certain, was attached to the support of the privileges of the House, yet the greatest enemy to them, without doors, could not have pursued a conduct more hostile than that of the right

honourable member this night, who invaded one of the most important and beneficial to the people of any with which that House was invested—the right of enquiry; his resistance to this motion tended to annihilate the most valuable faculty of the representative body, and to deprive the people of the only constitutional means of redress of grievances, by thus restraining the grand inquest of the nation in the exercise of its functions, and by rendering the acquisition of all the documents ancillary to enquiry impracticable. It was objected to this motion, that a compliance with it might expose the books and the proceedings of the corporations to the inspection of persons, who might be interested in embarrassing certain corporations, and involving their members in litigation; the terms of the motion were an answer to that argument; it was optional for the officer of the corporation, either to return to the House lists or an account of the number of the electors, or to attend with such books as might enable him to inform the House on this subject; or, if that mode could not be adopted, with papers containing such extracts from those books, as would enable him to afford the necessary information; if, perhaps, the uncertainty as to the existence of some of the electors, whose names were entered on the books, made the return of a list impracticable, only in that event the officer was to attend with such books or papers as he deemed necessary, which were not to be taken out of his custody; but after stating to the House the number of the electors, of whom he could pronounce with certainty, and also of those of whose existence he was doubtful, and likewise the offices or qualifications, such as those of burgesses or freemen, which enabled persons in his corporation to vote, he might retire with his books without the inspection of any person but himself; the names even of the electors were not desired, provided the officer's testimony was on oath.

He said, that this explanation must obviate the objection in the mind of every impartial man; but the resistance to this motion must be imputed to another cause, which gentlemen have not judged it prudent to assign; an apprehension that a measure of this nature may lay a strong foundation for a system, which must effectually destroy the monopoly of boroughs in this kingdom. He cautioned those interested in such monopolies, from indulging the vain and idle hope of being able to preserve their close boroughs. Their mysteries must soon be unveiled; therefore, why fear the exposure of their books? He was convinced, that two years, at farthest, must effect the total dissolution of those boroughs; therefore, he exhorted gentlemen, as they tendered their own honour and that of the House, the tranquillity and prosperity of their country, to concede at a time when concession could be attended with dignity. Administration, by their majority, might defeat the measure

this session, but they could not stop the progress of the public mind on political subjects, by counting noses on a division; the period was arrived when abuses could not be disguised, and would not be tolerated. He then moved,

“ That the returning officers, town clerks, or persons to whom the custody of the books of the corporations, in the boroughs in this kingdom, are entrusted, do return to this House lists of the number of electors in those boroughs respectively, and of the qualifications entitling persons to exercise the elective franchise in such boroughs respectively, or do attend this House on this day fortnight, with such books or papers as may enable them to inform this House respecting the aforesaid particulars.”

Mr. BARRINGTON replied to Mr. Forbes. He placed the opposition in a thousand ridiculous points of view, charging them with awkward dissimulation and hypocrisy, with endeavouring to acquire places, while they pretended popularity; and under the guise of patriotism exerting their feeble efforts to excite divisions, and weaken Government at the moment that the safety of the nation depended upon the union of the people and the strength of the executive power. He was heard with great approbation; his flashes of wit frequently setting the House in a roar. He concluded his humorous speech, with the following lines from *Hudibras*:

“ For some men carry things so even
 “ Between this world and hell and heaven;
 “ Without the least offence to either
 “ They freely jumble all together.”

Mr. DUQUERY called the attention of the House to the purport of the motion, which he thought as fair a one as ever was proposed. It was not a subject to be treated with that Harlequin-like levity which some gentlemen had exhibited, but one on which more depended than on any other that had ever been discussed in that House. Whatsoever way the gentlemen on the other side were disposed to treat reform, he advised them against pretending to support, while they were struggling to get rid of it; better would it be to oppose it at once on manly and avowed grounds, than thus to defeat it by flimsy subterfuge. He then gave the history of the question of reform from the beginning of the session. A right honourable member proposed to bring in a bill of reform, and was supported by another right honourable member, with a zeal and warmth that did him honour. The other side of the House caught the electric fire; and, under the virtuous impulse of the moment, agreed to a committee to inquire into the state of the representation. The committee was appointed on the statement and acknowledgment of the abuse.

Then Administration began to tergiversate. The committee did nothing, and reported progress. His right honourable friend had proposed a resolution, stating the general defect of the representation. It was opposed by Administration, on the ground that the committee had no documents before them to justify the resolution. They were told, they should inquire before they resolved. A motion was now proposed for documents to enable the committee to inquire, and they are refused; the defect is acknowledged, and said to be notorious; and the committee is directed to come to a resolution on the general principle. Nothing could be a stronger proof of the extreme rottenness of the subject, than thus refusing every document that could tend to elucidate it. Were not gentlemen conscious that the state of these boroughs would not bear examining, they would be prompt to lay the desired information before the House.

He was amazed that a man of so much legal knowledge as the Attorney General, should say that this order would operate as a *quo warranto* against the corporations, intended as it was, only to procure for the House some necessary information. The King's Bench frequently called for the books of corporations; those of Callan, Fethard and Trim, had been, to his own knowledge, for a long time together in the custody of the court. Had the grand inquest of the nation less authority than one of the inferior courts? If the committee were not suffered to go thus far, it were much better they had not engaged in it at all.

The House, he granted, ought not to act under intimidation; yet ought they to despise the opinion of the people? If the House wished to insult that opinion, and to irritate the people to the last degree, they could not have chosen a more effectual way of doing it, than by thus instituting a committee to enquire into what the people complained of—inadequate representation; and then shutting the doors of the committee against every document that could give information on the subject. When the committee was first instituted, the minds of the people began to grow more calm, even in that quarter of the kingdom where disaffection was strongest; by rejecting the present motion they would undo all the good that had been done, as the insincerity of the Administration, on this subject, would be manifest.

The representation of the people was defective, yet the House was the representative of the people. He exhorted them to remember their high character, and to act as became it. Never, he observed, were the general sentiments of the kingdom more liberal and enlightened than at the present period: Never were the decisions of the public mind more manly or more right, than they had recently appeared.

If the virtue of the nation should be found to exist in collective bodies, while it seemed totally extinct in the representative assembly, that would be a most dangerous state for the country.

He warned them against it, and advised them to emulate the virtue which shone so bright through the great mass of the people.

Should the committee, sitting to enquire into the state of the representation, wish to know the structure of a single borough, on which to found resolutions of fact preparatory to reform, it would be impossible for them to get at that information, if the present motion was negatived. It should, therefore, have his support.

Mr. MAXWELL said, though the Roman Catholic-question, and that of parliamentary reform, must be the subject of distinct and separate bills, yet it was utterly impossible to debate the one without regard and reference to the other; for whatever degree of franchise the Roman Catholics were to obtain, must have a proportionate degree of influence upon the representation of the kingdom; and if they were to be generally permitted to vote, their weight would be chiefly felt in counties, and the boroughs, being in Protestant hands, would become the bulwarks of what should be left of the Protestant establishment. He said, whatever was intended to be done for the Roman Catholics, should be gradual; a sudden power put into the hands of men long accustomed to restraint, might have the most fatal consequences; he instanced this in the French people: the human mind could not bear violent and sudden transitions; yet a sudden and very great transition seemed to be by both sides intended. He was sorry for the want of wisdom and true policy, in which such a measure could originate: he was sorry to see both sides running a race for political power, regardless of the national ruin which must ensue.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM professed himself a friend to parliamentary reform, but he wished that the subject should be taken up on large and general grounds. He asked what opinion would the people entertain, if the court of King's Bench would call for the books of all the boroughs in the kingdom? He wished for an inquiry on general grounds. He suggested that it might answer the honourable gentleman, if he called for a return of the charters of the boroughs, the situation of the counties, and the number of the electors. He said, he should join in any measures that went on general grounds.

Mr. STANLEY, in answer to Mr. Forbes, said, he thought the subject matter of the motion was of such public consequence, and the time at which it was brought forward so critical, that every man who had ever addressed Parliament, upon any occasion, was justified, if not bound, to speak out, and deliver his sentiments, whatever they may be. He said, he thought that any

man, who, on such a question, shrunk from his public duty, would justly incur the penalty of that Athenian law, which inflicted the crime of infamy upon any citizen, who, in times of great public danger, adopted a neutral character. He said, he thought this was a time at which every man who had a value for our constitution, was bound to stand forward as a watchful sentinel, to guard and to shield it from those dangerous assaults, and from those poisonous arrows with which it is assailed from every quarter. He said, he wished sincerely that the gentlemen on the other side had pursued the wise and salutary advice recommended from the throne, and which they had promised in their address to follow, namely, to promote union, concord, and content, among every branch of our fellow-subjects, and that we should have laboured to impress them with the value of our happy constitution, under which we live and enjoy so many blessings. He said, he lamented, for the honour of Ireland, that they had chosen this period for introducing innovation, or exciting discontent, and wished they had followed the wise example of Great Britain, where an universal sentiment of loyalty and attachment to the constitution prevailed. But in Ireland, as soon as the speech from the throne had announced the glad tidings of great joy, that three-fourths of his Majesty's subjects were to be delivered from the bondage of oppression, under which they so long laboured; as soon as the Government had undertaken the noble and benevolent task of redressing their grievances; as soon as they had declared their purpose of easing the burdens of the poorest class in the nation, by modifying the hearth-tax, and had, by the means, erected a lasting monument of their goodness in the heart and in the house of every peasant in the kingdom; whilst these and other great national measures engaged parliamentary attention; whilst France was tasting the bitter cup of innovation and discord, and doctrines avowed and disseminated, which tend, in their consequences, to dissolve all the bonds of society; to cut up all governments by the roots, and poison all the fountains of public security and happiness, a committee is moved for in Ireland to inquire into the state of its representation. If the object of that committee was to exhibit to the public view the blessings and superior advantages of our constitution, and impress the public mind with a reverence and value for it, it was a wise, a prudent, and a laudable undertaking; but if it was appointed for the purpose of looking, with a microscopic eye, into those little blemishes and defects which are inseparable from all human institutions, it was a most ill-timed, a most dangerous, and a most inauspicious measure for Ireland. That some defects might be discovered in our constitution, he was as ready to admit as any man; but this he would say, that there were disorders in the political as well as in the human frame, which have a salutary tendency, which retard or prevent the progress of more perilous distempers, and to remove

which, might be to accelerate the approach of death ; and he confessed he was not disposed, just at this moment, to make any sudden or grand experiments to ascertain, with exact precision, the portion of political liberty which might be created by human institutions. If local or particular abuses had prevailed in particular corporations, he was ready to apply specific remedies to those evils, and would be as ready as any man to concur in a temperate, a gradual, and a moderate reform of those evils, when a proper and specific plan was proposed for that purpose ; but he never would consent, at one sweep, to destroy all the sacred charters of the land, or make so violent and sudden an experiment on the constitution. Instances had occurred in history, to show, that when any violent convulsion was brewing against a state, the first step was to attack those emanations of royalty, corporations—those bodies politic, created for good government, trade and commerce. During the violent proceedings that took place in the latter end of the reign of Charles II. it was, among other things, thought expedient to new model all the corporations in the kingdom, for which purpose, informations in *quo warranto* were used as engines of state, and the liberties of most of them seized into the King's hands, which gave great and just alarm, and occasioned a law at the Revolution, to bridle this part of the prerogative. This motion is at once an attack on all the charters of the land, calling upon them to produce their titles, in order that holes might, if possible, be picked in their constitutions. It tended to disturb the peace, the quiet, and repose of the corporations of the kingdom. The common law was already sufficiently competent to punish or correct abuses of charters, where they deviated from the end of their institution, by *mandamus*, or informations in *quo warranto*, in the court of King's Bench ; but he called upon every lawyer in the House to declare, whether there ever was an instance, where that court forced a corporation to produce its charter or books, except where a specific complaint was made of a particular abuse, on oath. He was ready to correct specific abuses in particular boroughs, but he would not act like the cruel or ignorant surgeon, who cuts off every limb which, through indolence or inattention he will not attempt to cure. The present motion was utterly unprecedented, and had nothing to recommend it but novelty. In England, the Parliament proceeded to correct the particular abuses of the borough of Shoreham, but refused a general reform, as inexpedient and dangerous. In this country, it was infinitely a more perilous undertaking, where clubs, societies, and conventions, had incorporated to overawe the legislature, and many had conceived the wicked design, under colour of reforming the constitution, to overthrow and dissolve it ; and therefore he warned the House to proceed with moderation and firmness ; for if they yielded, the convention at Dungannon would not be content with reforming the boroughs ;

they declared they must have a radical and complete reform, and he feared they would proceed from innovation to innovation, until they introduced the worst species of all constitutions, an unbridled and unbalanced democracy. He observed, that as no plan was brought forward, he would consent to do no act to degrade the present representation. Our present constitution was an anchor which had hitherto secured a salutary steadiness to the state, and the courage of a statesman ought to be like that of a mariner, who will neither throw away his helm, or cut down his mast, until he knows by what better substitute his vessel may be enabled to withstand the assaults of the wind and the storms.

Mr. M. BERESFORD did not intend to have spoken in the debate, but from personal allusions having been made to him in consequence of his moving on a former night, that the committee on the state of the representation should report progress, and ask leave to sit again, he felt it his duty to express his sentiments, lest they should be misrepresented by one side of the House or the other.

He began with warmly condemning some expressions, which he thought strongly pointed against his right honourable and learned friend, [the Attorney General] by Mr. Duquerry, as unjustly directed against the best benefactor of either his professional or parliamentary life.

Mr. DUQUERRY explained, that he had alluded to the right honourable and learned gentleman with the most profound respect; and that no temptation of popularity on one side, or place upon the other, could ever induce him to utter an unkind expression of him.

Mr. M. BERESFORD apologized, and thought it becoming a gentleman, and a man of honour, to ask pardon on getting into error, rather than persevere in it.

He expressed himself a friend to reform, but such a one, as would not villify Parliament on one hand, or degrade Government in the eyes of the people on the other. It might be prudent to meliorate the constitution, but it could not be necessary to cast abuse upon any of the constituted authorities. This had always been his idea, that the constitution might be improved without giving up the dignity of Parliament. It was upon this ground, that he concurred in opinion with an honourable baronet [Sir Laurence Parsons], that even in its present state, the constitution was still competent to provide for the maintenance and improvement of public liberty; for the promotion of trade and agriculture; for enforcing the laws, and giving efficacy to a just system of jurisprudence. This was the true line to be held in

view by every man who was for reforming, without destroying, the legislature.

To the objection which was made to the theory of the British constitution, he opposed the objections made to the theory of the trial by jury; and yet in practice no institution was allowed to be more beneficial to the subject—as thus: it was objected that when the men were impannelled upon a verdict, it was supposed to be absurd that the twelve should be obliged to agree, and that one obstinate man should defeat the other eleven. In theory, this was strange and monstrous; in practice, however, no institution had been found to be more adequate to its object—the protection of the subject. From analogy he argued they ought not to decry the British constitution, which might be liable to a thousand theoretical objections, but which had the practical advantage of securing civil and religious liberty, until they were prepared to substitute a better mode of government in its place.

Upon this principle it was, that he had on a former night moved, that the committee should report progress, and ask leave to sit again; and that he had asserted that Parliament should rather stand upon the ground of its services to the public and the country, rather than upon that of self-commendation. At the time that he moved for this committee, he stated that its object was not a villification of Government, but to afford gentlemen opportunity of communicating their ideas to each other in committee on reform, as they could in that situation rise frequently, and declare what might or might not be a proper modification. His opinion further was, that the resolutions of the committee might be a guide to the gentlemen who had undertaken the arduous task of a reform in the representation of the people.

Thus far he had declared himself ready to go, and no farther. Still he would consent that every information might be afforded, which would tend to remedy the evils, which at present exist in the constitution. Therefore he had no objection, that the lists required should be laid on the table, relying on the officers of the House, that they would permit no person to inspect them but members. And that the number, and even the names, should be produced, authenticated by the proper officer.

In reply to the argument of Mr. Duquerry, that the books of Trim and Dundalk had been produced, it furnished him with an irrefragable objection to the practice being followed. Those who had access to those books betrayed the entries, and laid the foundation of such a complicated scene of expence and litigation, as he felt it his duty to oppose in the first instance.

Mr. ALEXANDER (of Derry) said, if opposition looked to the confidence of the nation, their conduct should be great and dignified; nothing could be more undignified than any appearance of a scramble for power; nothing more pernicious than any lan-

guage which could encourage persons out of doors whose avowed object was to intimidate Parliament; there were on both sides of the House gentlemen of great honour and great talents; the government of the country deserved the support of such men, for its object was manifestly the public good; but if in the attainment of this object, there should be any difference of sentiment, he besought gentlemen to respect each other, and not by any asperity of language encourage that spirit without doors, that aimed at their common destruction: he wished to see some enlarged and comprehensive plan of reform, before he would consent to pull down the ancient structure of the constitution.

Col. HUTCHINSON declared, that he would vote for the motion. He said the House was pledged to a reform. Parliament was not sent here to pass an eulogium on themselves, but to render benefit to their constituents. The motion now before the House was a motion merely of information: the minds of men at the present period were agitated; but he did not believe that there was any disposition among the people injurious to the constitution or government; if there was, they were but few in number, and weak in power. He observed, that the desire for a parliamentary reform was universal; it was wished for ten years ago. In 1783, several petitions had been presented to Parliament, praying for a parliamentary reform; and the present wish for a parliamentary reform cannot be attributed to seditious or factious motives.

If the House rejected this motion, they would act as judges, who refuse to hear the necessary witnesses, and then say, the allegations had not been proved. The present time, he thought, was peculiarly proper to engage in a reform, in order to evince to the people, that the object of the established government was the happiness and good of the people. The dignity of the House was not in danger—it consisted of men whose rank, family, and fortune, would secure them respect, if their own acts did not degrade them. Let them only satisfy the reasonable desires of the country, and they would do honour to themselves, and give security and peace to the country.

Mr. R. STUART thought the conduct of Administration on this subject totally unintelligible. He exposed their prevarication through the whole of the business, and accused them of special pleading to every motion that had been proposed. Why did Administration grant the committee, but to enquire? and how can they enquire without the materials called for? He advised them rather to oppose fairly and openly, than in this insidious and cowardly manner. To establish a moderate and reformed system was, he said, the only way to secure strength to the throne, and this system cannot be established without changing the present one. He was ready to vote any money from his constituents

to support the established form of government, but he would vote none to support the abuses and vices of the constitution. To give Government too much strength while they were determined to support those vices, would be to give men an instrument for their own destruction, and could tend only to establish a military government.

Notwithstanding all that had been said of the difficulty of effecting a reform, he thought a reasonable system, such as would gratify all reasonable men, might very easily be devised, and this would render the government of this country extremely easy; for, in fact, the difficulties of Administration hitherto have arisen rather from supporting the present ruinous system, than from any opposition that had been made to the necessary measures of Government. It was the vices of this existing system that had driven the public mind into a state of agitation; if they were suffered to pore longer over those vices, it would be impossible, in times like these, to foresee what follies they might adopt.

PRIME SERJEANT opposed the motion—He said, if the corporation books should be produced, it might be found that many corporations had fallen below the majority of the integral number; those corporations would be of course dissolved in law, and the men who represented them in that House, would then have no right to sit there.

Mr. F. HUTCHINSON asked why the House appointed a committee? Was it not to enquire into the state of the representation of the people, for the purpose of remedying it? He said, that two motions have been brought forward in this business; the first was negatived on the ground that it went to degrade Parliament; but he contended, that the present motion was a motion of such a nature, that no man could resist. In agreeing to the present motion, it would be making some progress in the business of a parliamentary reform. He took a view of the situation of this country in the year 1779, when America was struggling for her independence, and he adverted to the present situation of France.

He recommended it to his Majesty's ministers to look into the state of the public mind; and he warned the ostensible minister of this country, as he tenders the peace of the country—as he tenders his Majesty's government, and the constitution of the country, not to play with the public feelings. He then avowed his principles, which were a perpetual connection with England; to rally round the throne; and rise or fall with the British nation.

Mr. M. MASON and J. C. BERESFORD spoke against the motion.

Mr. BUSHE.—I shall oppose both the motion and the amendment proposed by the learned member: they are both of the

old school of parliament management, which was suited to the times in which it was practised, when we used to fence with foils; but we are now engaged in more serious contests, and must use other weapons. If we wished to trifle with opposition, or to act unfairly, we could do it by adopting such motions as this, and we could beat them with their own weapons, we should have nothing more to do than to admit the principle, that the committee ought to go into these minute enquiries; we should say with the member who spoke last, that as judges we are bound to examine all the evidences, and thus the committee could never close, and the question of parliamentary reform could never be fairly brought before us, whilst we could alledge that there was any evidence not yet examined, or a single fact relating to the state of representation which had not been inquired into, and thus we could put off the business just as we found it convenient; and thus the motion before us is as faulty in point of management, as it is defective in point of principle.

Two extraordinary propositions have been laid down this night: The first, that by rejecting this motion, we decide against a reform—that has had as full an answer as it merited; the other, that by appointing a committee to enquire, we pledged ourselves for a reform. Thank God we do not live in a country, where to enquire and to condemn are synonymous terms. The argument reminds me of what was said when a special commission was appointed to try a man in the country where I reside: Some gentlemen thought, that because the man happened to be acquitted, the commission had not done its duty, and neither judges nor lawyers deserved payment, as they had not found the culprit guilty. The honourable mover tells us, that we must have a reform, that we had better agree to the principle now, though we have not seen the plan, for we shall be compelled to it. He puts me in mind of Don Quixotte, who met certain travellers on the road, and commanded them to declare, that the Lady Dulcinea del Toboso was the most beautiful person in the world: “Sir,” answered the travellers, “will you tell us where we may see the lady, or at least shew us some picture or counterfeit of her, whereby we may form our judgment?” The Knight of the Woe-ful Countenance answered, “What ye base and unreasonable men, do you shew desire to see the lovely Dulcinea before you acknowledge her perfections? No, there would then be no merit in the confession. But I swear to you, that you shall acknowledge them without having seen her at all, or else you shall feel the weight of this valorous arm.” I am sensible of the right honourable member’s arm, and it is with great humility that I express a wish to see his Dulcinea.

We are asked repeatedly, why did we agree to a committee, if we resist such motions as this; and what ought to be the business of such a committee? Why, the business that was held out at the

time of proposing it; to debate on the state of representation with more freedom than we could do in this House; to hear the plans suggested, and to enable the member who is to move the reform, to collect the sentiments of the House, and meet his wishes. If we came to resolutions to make broad and general ones—of that nature was the third motion read in the committee by my right honourable friend: In fact, I see but three motions that could be proper; either one approving of the present representation entirely, if we thought ourselves justified by the fact, which was not attempted; or, secondly, one so reprobating that representation as to decide at all events to change it, such as was proposed by my right honourable friend; or, thirdly, one of a mixed nature, neither declaring it perfect, nor yet so faulty as to be cast away without a plan of a better one being proposed, and declaring our willingness to listen to such a proposal if it should be made to us. Such was the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the latter, I think, was the most conformable to the fact, and to the situation of the country; but both his and the other which was proposed were of a general nature, and free from the antiquated dexterity of the motion before us. Who is it that the honourable member wants to refute by bringing forward these details? Were we so deficient in candour as to deny facts, or to say that the representation was equal, we had some right to expect equal candour from him. It is not, Sir, to refute our arguments that he brings forward this motion, but it is to hold up the representation of your country like the painter's picture, and to call every man who pleased, to daub over the parts which he thought faulty, and to do this when no artist had yet appeared, capable of painting another that should be as good, or of restoring the old ones. He does this at a time when he tells us that it is a wild theory to carry on Government with public detestation, and yet he invokes the public detestation against that body which is to carry on the public Government, and at the time of the greatest peril. He should have more mercy on the property of a country, already too much diminished in its value; on a credit not a little impaired by public turbulence; on a revenue diminished in a sum equal to the interest of five millions sterling. He should chuse some fitter time for shaking the representation of Parliament and the stability of Government. I will not now debate whether any reform can be expedient at such a time as this, but I will say, that if you will have one, two things are requisite; first, that it be founded in sound deliberation, for you know by the example of France, that if it be absurd in itself, it cannot stand, even though the people should at first approve of it; and, secondly, you should take care that it should be so acceptable to the people, as to give it a reasonable chance of stability, for even though you like it yourselves, if they do not, you will fail of the great object of tranquillizing them.

But what is the measure proposed to us; before you know that your new representation will be acceptable, before you have deliberated upon it yourselves, you are called upon to hold up the constitution which protects you, as an object for general defamation. Had an emissary of France been the adviser, had an aide-camp of Dumourier been sent over to direct our councils, what advice would he have given but this, first destroy all reverence for your present form of Government, do it by a side-wind, and by parliamentary artifice, if you cannot do it by a direct resolution; and I will willingly take my chance, that nothing which you can afterwards substitute, will content or govern a triumphant democracy; plan after plan may be then proposed, and none of them will satisfy till at last a turbulent populace progressive in their demands, and capricious from their victories, will call the question to primary assemblies, and sweep away at once the reform and the reformers.

Mr. MASON next rose to make one short observation, which was, that nothing could be more idle and ineffectual than the motion, if complied with, would prove; the Roman Catholic bill would soon be passed, this would give a great number of new electors, and the same returns that would at this moment shew the state of the electors, as soon as that bill passed, no longer be just or accurate.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD said, he was surprised at the means by which opposition pretended to support a parliamentary reform; they seemed determined to destroy the principle of the measure, by frittering it in silly and partial motions calculated to amuse the people out of doors, but to delay the necessary proceedings, which, if they were sincere, they would endeavour to accelerate, but they contented themselves with making speeches which might furnish the republican societies with argument. A gentleman in his harangue had said that by the American and French revolutions a new light had burst forth upon mens' understandings; for his part he would not trust that light; it was an *ignis fatuus*, and as to the kind concern the gentleman had expressed lest the House should be intimidated, that gentleman might have spared his apprehension; the House was not of a spirit to bend to intimidation.

Mr. GEORGE OGLE. The two great objects of Parliament, at present, are the Roman Catholic bill and the parliamentary reform. My decided opinion is, that the Roman Catholic bill should be first decided, for till it be known how far you intend to go in that bill, it is impossible to know how to act as to the reform. If the Roman Catholic bill, in its present form, passes, the Roman Catholics will then be in complete possession of the

country, and it is impossible to say how long the Protestant religion will be the religion of the state; and we may live to see boroughs, now disgraced with the epithet *rotten*, the only defence of the Protestants of Ireland.

Mr. GRATTAN thought it very extraordinary if the same degree of authority which the court of King's Bench exercised upon the application of any individual injured, could not be employed by that House, in order to rectify the representation of all the people. The entries in corporation books were made for the express purpose of satisfying and informing courts of justice as to their proceedings, and yet that House, the grand inquest of the nation, was to be precluded from inspecting them. What could the public suppose from these circumstances? Must they suppose gentlemen to be insincere in their professions of reform? It was said, that from these returns it might be found, that some integral part of the corporation was destroyed, and the charter of course invalidated. What, said he, if the charter is null and void in law, is it valid in representation? Are you therefore to avoid enquiry into the fact, and shall its illegality establish its constitutionality? But what is the result of all this argument? If there be any it is this, that however proper for a court of law this investigation be, it is unfit for the high court of Parliament; and if this be the case, the committee ought to consider the state of representation as an imposition upon yourselves and an imposition upon the public.

But, it is said that the motion is a vilification of Parliament, and an attack on the constitution. What is it? A motion to bring before you certain books and papers. Is this an attack upon your constitution? If it is, the court of King's Bench attacks the constitution and villifies Parliament. Can such arguments be seriously urged? If they are, the resolution itself refutes them. Again, it is said that it is unnecessary to go into particulars, because there are certain facts which gentlemen are too candid to deny, and which we should be too decent to examine; and what are these facts? That boroughs return members with very few constituents! Do these gentlemen talk of reviling the constitution, who say that its abuses are so notorious that it would be idle to enquire into them; should such an expression come from common talkers, I should not have minded it; but when I hear such words from men of sense and weight, I must think that there is something in their arguments radically wrong.

You say to us, "Do not enquire into particular facts, but go at once to the great principle;" that very principle which you resisted but the other night: What are we to infer from this conduct, but that you are insincere on the subject of parliamentary reform? But I must say, that in no case could your insincerity be

so mischievous both to yourselves and to the nation. The credit which you took to yourselves for favouring this object early in the session, has rendered your retreat not only dangerous, but impossible; by urging public expectation to the very utmost, in order to court popularity, you have become more mischievous than those whom you call insurgents.

He went into a recital of charges against Administration. He was sorry to be betrayed, he said, into personality, or particular accusation; he was grown too old for those things, but he must vindicate himself from the charge of embarrassing government wantonly, and he declared that if they supported this measure warmly and decidedly, he would serve them, though he never would act with them, he would vote with them unplaced, unpensioned, and unofficed, if they conceded his favourite object to the wishes of the people.

SOLICITOR GENERAL said, the motion was unprecedented, unparliamentary, and impracticable, and calculated for nothing else but to degrade Parliament, to affront their constituents, and to inflame the country. If the motion is conceded you drag those who have sent two-thirds of you here, like culprits before you, without having a single fact stated or substantiated on which you could found a decision. He said, that it was no light matter to summon every efficient officer of such a number of corporate bodies, but also drag from them the archives and monuments of their existence. It was asked, shall not the grand inquest of the nation be competent to do that in this case which was competent to the King's Bench in the case of a single burgess? But it may be answered, that the King's Bench would not in such a case make such an order, even as to one corporation, without having a case and allegations before them, on which a decision became necessary between the parties contending, and when the documents became necessary to the adjustment of the right by a judicial determination, but even in the case of a single corporation, the King's Bench would never make so wanton an order as to order up the officers and books of the corporation, in order to invite the accusation of every officious relator that might wish to disturb its quiet; but this was a sweeping *quo warranto*, where we were to become the accusers of those from whom we derived our powers, and the ground of the accusation was, that they had given us existence.

If this motion is granted upon the principle avowed, the death warrant of Parliament is signed, for it must be followed up by an address to the King to dissolve us, as either having disclaimed the authority from which we are derived, or pronouncing ourselves inadequate representatives of the people. They can no longer look to you as competent to the great purposes in which you are

engaged, and neither Protestant or Catholic should accept a law or a favour at your hands, which you are going to embrue in the sacrifice of your constituents, and in the suicide of yourselves.

It is said that this measure is called for by the voice of the people, and yet no man has been found either within or without these walls that has offered a substitute for that system which so many have loudly condemned; but under the pretence of reform you were inviting a babel to your bar, to confound by confusion the clamour of the discordant and disaffected. You had better abdicate your situation, and acknowledge the United Irishmen and the Convention of Dungannon your superiors, than to yield to their mandates at the point of the bayonet, to the mandates of those who had not only defamed you, but had exalted the enemies of mankind; who had condemned Great Britain for defending her laws, her constitution and our common rights by a just and necessary war, and had set themselves above the legislature of the country, in animadverting upon the necessary provisions for her internal safety. Will gentlemen at once avow that we are to yield our seats to such men, and that the president of Dunganon is to fill that chair to which we have long looked up with veneration,

"O! Domus antiqua, heu! quam dispari,

"Dominare Domino!"

Here the Solicitor drew a contrast between the conduct of gentlemen in the year 1784, when the measure of reform was introduced from the armed convention at the Rotunda; he said, if that measure was condemned then as coming from such a body, in which the pride, the spirit, and property of the country was assembled, would they yield to a rabble, because they assumed the name but had degraded the character of the ancient Volunteers of Ireland. He reminded the House of a time when every gentleman amongst them was proud of his uniform, but when mean political agitators had assumed the title and the garb, the gentleman and his pride were disgraced, and the loyalty of the country was defamed.

The House then divided on Mr. Forbes's motion,

Ayes 48 — Noes 137 — Majority 89

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. R. Stewart, and Colonel Hutchinson; for the Noes, Mr. J. C. Beresford, and the Solicitor General.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH thought as there was a probability that a right honourable gentleman who had promised to bring forward this subject, would do it as soon as the Catholic question was fully disposed of, it would be advisable to adjourn the committee till Tuesday fortnight.

Mr. HOBART thought there was no occasion to defer it so long; if the committee were adjourned to next Tuesday, and

there should then appear a necessity, it might as properly be postponed at that time as now.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY proposed that the committee should be adjourned to next December; for it would, he said, be much more manly to reject the business at once, than thus to trifle with the public. He declared for himself and for his right honourable relation, that they never had expected any good from the committee; his right honourable relation had therefore resolved to bring forward specific resolutions on the subject in the House. The committee, he observed, had been moved by a gentleman, a friend of government; and he could not help taking notice that from the moment he made the motion, that gentleman had never taken one step in the committee of his own appointing—never had opened his mouth—never had uttered one syllable! What then could the public think of parliamentary reform, or of that gentleman's sincerity, when they saw that the committee moved by him was merely a pit into which it was intended parliamentary reform should fall and be smothered? But ministers will find they have deceived themselves in this, as upon other occasions, where they acted with the same art and duplicity; they may be assured they will not so easily get rid of the subject, for we will follow it from day to day, and from year to year, and never be deterred until we have succeeded.

Mr. CORRY. I have been so personally called upon, that I should think myself wanting in respect to the House, were I not to state my conduct to them. A right honourable gentleman having given notice that he intended to move for leave to bring in a bill for a parliamentary reform, and the same evening a motion having been made for "a committee to enquire into the abuses in the Commons' representation;" that motion following immediately upon the speech on the subject of reform, did not appear to me very well calculated to attain the end it pretended to pursue. I, Sir, had always been a friend to parliamentary reform; many years ago I took it up; I liked it upon principle, and I was pledged to the measure; the motion was an attack upon Government—it was likely to defeat the measure, and therefore I thought it highly objectionable, as we should rather endeavour to conciliate all sides of the House than provoke an opposition from either; I therefore on the instant got up, and proposed to leave out the word *abuses*, and let the motion run, "to enquire into the state of the representation;" the proposal was universally accepted, and my end was attained. But, Sir, I would by no means presume to take a lead in a business which was already in such hands; I know too well my own humble situation—I know too well the respect that is due to great families and to great connections—I know too well the exalted character of the

right honourable gentleman who moved it : Indeed, if the subject had not been mentioned at all, I would not be the man to mention it at such a time ; I should fear to inflame the public mind ; I know, Sir, the people are bent upon the measure, and having been introduced, I think something ought to be done : I do not mean that we should yield to the turbulence of wild theoretical reformers, but I think that at a proper time something effectual should be done that would satisfy the people for ever. Having voted both nights with the honourable gentleman, I can only say, that I am sorry that I gave two votes on questions so trifling, introduced upon a subject which ought to be taken on a great scale.

And now, Sir, give me leave to ask, which acted with most sincerity, the honourable gentleman who voted for the committee against his judgment, or I, who endeavour to make the committee as much as possible effectual ? Does he talk of sincerity whose life has been one tissue of insincerity ? Does he talk of sincerity ? I will talk with him upon that theme until the blood shall rush back to his heart affrighted from his countenance—Does he talk of sincerity ? why, Sir, if insincerity were to be personified, it would take the shape of the honourable gentleman.

Let not then the gentleman who has given the most unqualified and unlimited support to every measure of every administration that would trust him, pretend to character ; he never will recover character in this country—the people never will confide in him, they are not so stupid as to be humbugged by the awkward fawning of one, who on the score of character, is not entitled to any credit ; neither let him presume to domineer in this House, for there are gentlemen on this side, and on every side, too independent, too spirited, too honourable to submit to such treatment.

Mr. PONSONBY said, I wish the honourable gentleman had gone on, as he asserted he might, to animadvert on my conduct ; he had no reason to stop—I am able to defend myself against his ability, and against his malevolence. His first charge is, that I voted against a parliamentary reform : I did, Sir, I voted against it when an armed convention introduced it to the House of Commons on the point of the bayonet, and I would again oppose it if brought forward in the same manner ; I did so, because I had spirit enough to do what he would not venture to attempt. He says that I was degraded—the charge is false—I spurned the despicable administration of Lord Buckingham, which he supported ; and though I might have returned with increased influence, I rejected them with abhorrence and contempt ; so much for the truth of the honourable gentleman.

He says I voted against a pension bill—I did so, and I would do so again if it were not coupled with a responsibility bill and

other measures which the country demands. He says the public do not give me their confidence: Sir, I am not vain enough to say they do; but I will give them such proofs that whatever confidence they may have in my motives, they will be convinced by my actions—that I am their friend.

We, Sir, who act on this side of the House, are not afraid of the aspersions that are thrown upon us as men combined to force ourselves into power, while we see ministers every now and then taking up one of our measures in order to conciliate the people; they take great credit to themselves for reducing the hearth money, which was our measure, for a barren land bill, which was our measure, what drives them to this? Their want of character; and thus they will proceed, and when they have adopted our measures one by one, they will then vaunt their popularity, and cry—Lord what an upright administration we are!

Mr. HOBART said, the honourable gentleman having alluded to Lord Buckingham's administration, he thought it necessary to say a few words, not in defence of Lord Buckingham, his good intentions to this country were too well known, the benefits derived to Ireland from his government had excited too much gratitude in the nation to make a defence necessary; but he arose merely to other matters which had fallen from the honourable gentleman. The honourable gentleman said that, he could have returned to the service of Government with increased influence. Mr. Hobart said most positively, and was most certain that the honourable gentleman could not have returned with increased influence. The honourable gentleman had said, that Government designed to smother the question of parliamentary reform when they consented to the committee; the honourable gentleman must suppose Government were fools if they imagined they could so get rid of the question, when two different gentlemen had given notice of their intentions to bring it forward. When Government consented to the committee, they did it for the purpose of discussion, and that purpose had been attained.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY. I say I might have remained with increased influence.

Mr. HOBART. From all that I could learn from Lord Buckingham, the honourable gentleman could not have remained.

Captain BERSFORD. An honourable gentleman has said that he resisted the parliamentary reform when introduced upon the point of a bayonet: Sir, I would be glad to know if ever there was a more threatening time than the present? if ever there was a time when Government manifested a stronger desire to conciliate all the people? or if ever there was a time when it was more the

duty and the interest of all men to rally round the Government, and strengthen them with their utmost support?

It is unfair, Sir, to say that Government wish to cast this question into oblivion; they have proved the contrary by the alacrity with which they consented to have it brought forward; and it is not only unfair, but highly mischievous, to misrepresent their conduct, and irritate the people against them now, when a sort of phrenzy has gone forth in the world: no man yet knows the state of the country, who is a friend, or who is an enemy, but the true friends of the country will unite to support their king, as they have so honourably done in England; and those who are secret enemies will be known, by sacrificing national security and national prosperity to a paltry play for offices.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he was far from wishing to get rid of the committee; but if gentlemen would continue to adopt inefficacious measures, it was not the fault of Administration that they failed. It had become a practice with gentlemen in the opposition, whenever they proposed bad or weak measures, to impute the failure of them, and even to make particular speeches for those gentlemen with whom he had the honour to act; for his part he wished for no such godfathers. The court of King's Bench had been mentioned: He asked, did the court of King's Bench ever call charters in question, by putting them on their defence in the first instance, and forcing corporations to furnish evidence against themselves? Severe measures should never be wantonly adopted, and no man could deny that this was a very severe one. He could not see the use of that practice of crimination and recrimination which gentlemen were so fond of; he protested against it; it was debasing the authority of Parliament, and was not productive of any advantage either to the House or the public. The debate he had just heard was the most painful he had ever witnessed, and in his opinion the least useful: the motives of gentlemen on the other side might be very good, he believed they were so, but it did not follow that those of his friends must be bad, and still less that they should be accused without any reason. Administration did not want the support of those gentlemen to maintain their offices; they only wished for unanimity to ensure public tranquillity, and if opposition acted as they did, they would sacrifice something for the public good; they would not peevishly continue to make captious and splenetic objections to the pilots, whilst the national vessel was in danger; they would not embarrass those functions which true patriotism would rather assist. It was true, they had given Government substantial support when they had voted money and troops; if they chose to claim those laurels, he cared not who wore them while the public weal was advanced.

Mr. GRATTAN entreated the House to proceed with that temper and dignity which became members of parliament. It had been urged that opposition offered those questions with a view to inflame the people; this proved that ministers were insincere in their professions of reform—he had suspected their sincerity, and he remembered that when he spoke of their being pledged to a reform, he had been told that they had only agreed to go into the committee:—to judge from hence he must suppose that they were not friends to reform. Many gentlemen on that side of the House, he knew, were individually friends to reform; but had ministers taken any step but of hostility to the proposition? opposition had given every support to them where sensible men ought; but not against the measures of the people—therefore, they were arraigned for refusing to enter into a combination against the people; it was true they had not supported them in rejecting a place bill, a pension bill, a responsibility bill, &c. &c. &c. but they had supported them for the defence of the kingdom in voting troops and money. A time would come when they would acknowledge that to be wisdom, which they now called sedition; they would in time become the agents of opposition; they would then pass all those popular bills—but at the same time they would revile the framers, and turn against those who had taught them wisdom.

The motion for Tuesday fortnight was withdrawn, and the committee order to sit next Tuesday.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH gave notice, that he would, next day, make a motion relative to internal reform.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1793.

After some routine business, Sir HENRY CAVENDISH rose to introduce the motion which he, last night, promised on the subject of reform. He began by expressing his regret that the House was not more fully attended, in order that all might understand the nature and be led to consider the necessity of those motions; and as the objects of them, in his mind, materially concerned the order and the dignity of that House, and of its proceedings; so he trusted he might safely say they materially affected every member of that House; and therefore he thought them necessary to what he would call an internal parliamentary reform. Before he proceeded to explain all his objects, he would read the motion he meant to introduce first; it was, "that when any specific business is in debate before this House, and that when any member rises in debate and introduces any new business till the first be

disposed of—such member may do so; but Mr. Speaker ought to interrupt him.”

This motion, he said, was not a child of his own fancy; but it was an order adopted by the British House of Commons, out of which much regularity had arisen; and therefore he conceived it would be wise, as it was necessary to adopt some such motion here, more especially as the irregularity of debates in this House had been long increasing, and was greater in the present session than he had ever remembered it. These irregularities, with the asperated personalities which had become so frequent, were so alarming, that if the House suffered them to grow farther into usage without some efforts to check their progress; the decorum of Parliament would shortly be degraded into the confusion of a bear-garden. Under this head there were a few things he wished to state to the House, to which he hoped an indulgent hearing. He did not assume to be a complete master of parliamentary order, but there was a resolution in the journals upon the table, that for want of parliamentary order, the House of Commons must become tumultuous and not deliberative. One of the first things of which he had to complain was, the apparent impossibility in forcing gentlemen to pay the fees of the House to the clerks, for which many of them were indebted since the last session; on this matter he would make no motion this night, but wished to apprise gentlemen, that if at the end of a fortnight the necessity should still exist, he would bring forward a motion for the purpose of enforcing the payment of such fees.

The next thing was the impossibility of procuring the attendance of gentlemen in the House at such an hour as to proceed timely and earnestly on the public business, and avoid the very disagreeable necessity into which gentlemen regular in their attendance, were continually pushed, of waiting the issue of debates to very protracted and unseasonable hours of the night, to the great injury of their health, when if gentlemen could be prevailed to attend early, the public business would be effected with alacrity; the time of the public and of the House would not be wasted, nor their patience harrassed out by late sittings. For his own part, he was very willing to attend his parliamentary duty, however arduous; but he felt he was not made of iron or steel—but that age had its effects; and though he was still, he believed, able to knock up some of the *four year olds*, he did not on all occasions feel himself disposed to dally one half his evenings in an half empty house, and afterwards to sit up to late hours with young members in their vigour, who never thought proper to saunter down to their parliamentary duty, without a good dinner in their stomachs, and a cheerful bottle in their heads, to laugh at the joke of keeping others waiting for them.

Long and irrelevant speeches came next under his censure, as well as personalities in debate: the first generally served but

to waste time to no effect—and the other to produce nothing but retort, and altercation, and explanation, and utter deviation from the subject of debate.

Another species of indiscreet irregularity was, the frequent cry of *hear! hear! hear!*—a sort of clamour that some times meant compliment—sometimes irony—now something, then nothing—but at all times seldom any thing better than to interrupt the Speaker, and deafen his hearers.

All these things he considered as derogatory from the order, the dignity and decorum of the House, tending only to waste its time, to impede its proceedings, and lessen its respect without doors: and he concluded by moving the question before stated.

The motion was seconded by Mr. TIGHE, who, however declared with the members who opposed it, to wit, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. W. B. Ponsonby, Mr. G. Ponsonby, Sir Hercules Langrishe, Mr. Bagwell, Mr. Holmes, Sir John Blaquiere, and Mr. Grattan; all of whom said they did not oppose the motion from any opinion that it was unimportant, or its objects not highly desirable, nor from any idea that the honourable baronet could intend to convey by it the slightest censure upon the conduct of the Speaker; but least the motion going forth to the world, should be conceived by those who had not an opportunity of knowing the right honourable gentleman who filled the chair, and to the dignified deportment and strict propriety, of whose conduct in that station, each of these gentlemen expressed himself in terms of the warmest eulogium and highest panegyric, should construe it into a censure.

Mr. HOBART said, he was most firmly persuaded that no member in the House had an higher or more sincere respect for the right honourable gentleman who filled the chair, than the honourable baronet who brought forward this motion; and he was sure no consideration on earth would induce him to introduce any motion, which, in his own opinion, could have a tendency to throw the slightest censure upon the right honourable gentleman; and however ready he was to coincide with the honourable baronet, on the subjects particularly alluded to in debate, he must acknowledge, with great deference to him, a wish that the motion might be withdrawn; because he feared that such a motion going forth in the newspapers, might be construed as a censure upon the official conduct of a gentleman, to the honour of whose character he had now the very great satisfaction to declare, that during the whole time he had the honour of sitting in that House, he never saw any instance wherein his conduct became the subject of a question, that it was not also the subject of unanimous approbation.

Mr. SPEAKER now rose, and in a stile of the most dignified, yet profound respect, expressed his obligations for the very handsome manner in which the House had been pleased to approve his conduct, and at the same time assured the House, that as the best mode of deserving that approbation, he should continue to use his utmost endeavours to support the orders of the House.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH, after disclaiming every idea of disrespect to the chair, and expressing his sanguine hope that his objects would be fully obtained by means of the discussion which it had excited, withdrew his motion.

Mr. GRATTAN highly approved the objects of Sir Henry Cavendish; and wished they might be fully effected. On the subject of early attendance on the chair, he regretted much the loitering indolence and apathy in which many gentlemen seemed to approach their parliamentary duty, and he suggested a wish to the chair, that an experiment or two were tried to enforce an early attendance by adjournment whenever there were not members enough to form an House when the Speaker should take the chair.

The SPEAKER having consulted the sense of the House, this suggestion was highly and unanimously approved; and it was agreed henceforward, that the Speaker do take the chair each day precisely at four.

The House adjourned to Friday next.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 1793.

The order of the day for the second reading of the Roman Catholic bill being called for,

Mr. GEORGE KNOX rose to submit a motion to the House, in order to try whether this bill was considered by them as perfectly meeting the gracious wish of his Majesty in his speech from the throne—a wish that measures might be adopted which would gratify his Roman Catholic subjects, and he would himself add, not merely gratify, but satisfy them in the fullest extent; and here he begged leave to censure those persons who had attributed to the introducers of reform and other popular measures, a disposition and intention to excite that flame which this bill endeavoured to allay; for he attributed evil motives where good intentions might be from circumstances presumed, must speak either in ignorance or malice; it was not the genuine spirit of human nature to ascribe the actions of virtue to the motives of vice. He recollect-

ed the proceedings of the last session of Parliament ; but that recollection only proved to him, that a public body will never act as an individual ; that to resist was only to encourage them, and to refuse served merely to demand. In this session he wished to shew to Catholics, that the House met, not to discuss their claims but their interests—under no apprehension but that of erring, under no fear but of being unjust, until the Catholics were permanently satisfied, the constitution would not be satisfied—their claims were the claims of the constitution. It was said the Catholics did not require more than the bill offered them, and therefore they should obtain no more. Was this reasoning for an Irish parliament ? Was it not more fit for a French convention ? Shall their demands be the definitive measure of concession, and their moderation the gauge of the liberality of Parliament ? He trusted that he would hear no such sentiment in that House, and he was sure it would not be found out of the House, save upon the banners of sedition, or as the watch-words of rebellion.

That Roman Catholics should finally succeed in their emancipation had long since been decided when the House had allowed them means of acquiring property ; it was impossible to imagine that men should possess property without complete liberty ; and what reason was there to delay that liberty ? The popery laws had their origin in the weakness of the country ; the strength of Ireland, had overgrown them ; the Protestants were heretofore but a colony, and could not exercise dominion without buying the protection of England ; the price of that protection had been their own liberty—whilst for the lands the Protestants possessed, there were still living the former possessors, whilst Protestant and Catholic knew each other only as enemies ; these laws were not only pardonable but necessary ; but the bitterness of animosity had gradually declined ; the Protestant garrison walked abroad and conversed with the Irish nation—they became friendly and united ; the Protestant felt that a merely *barren inheritance* in an impoverished country was not an object of ambition, and as the horrors of Popery decayed, English domination became more irksome to him. From the moment he felt the pride of political independence, he saw and acknowledged the necessity of Catholic emancipation—all the great attainments of Irish freedom had ushered in the period of Irish union. By the present bill, Catholics were not admitted to the constitution—wealth did not obtain its due proportion of power ; but there was an attempt to bribe the beggary of the nation against their natural protectors, the aristocracy. Why was the lower order in the state so numerous, but that by a regular gradation of rank and power the intermediate orders might be able best to preserve those below them by submission to those above ? This was the chain of obedience and protection which formed civil society ; and yet by this bill the rabble (an order hardly acknowledged by the constitution) was

courted, and the natural leaders of those men were slighted, as unfit objects for the liberality of the legislature. Was this intended to buy off the union which has lately appeared amongst the rabble? It was a vain and useless attempt, for to-morrow their landlords could form again that union by their influences.

In this conduct he saw the success of republican principles—those principles which Paine inculcated and every honest man abhors—by taking from wealth its title to power, those principles were effected; for this was the leading feature of those seditious writings. Why was there in any country an aristocracy, but because wealth will naturally attract power, and that power must either act in the state, (in which case it acts to national advantage) or it must act out of the state, and in that case operate to its destruction? In France, wealth is excluded from power—yet in France wealth was now omnipotent; that wretch, who stood detested by every honest man, who had dyed his hands in the blood of his king and his kinsman, to whose destruction vengeance seemed to loiter and retard the universal wishes of mankind, had found, though wealth was nominally excluded, that wealth was effectually power; and though his property weighs not apparently in the state, it has made him omnipotent in that miserable country. While this example was before our eyes, we should not adopt the fatal policy of disunion, for wherever Protestants and Catholics were inimical, republicans rejoiced; when the Catholics, in the violence of dispute last summer seemed farthest from their wishes, republicans rejoiced; when Protestants seemed inclined to concessions, what was the language of the people of the North on that occasion? Insult, said they, to Catholics—insult—demand—insist—or we desert you; for well they know that when Protestants and Catholics are united, their objects must fail.

He then insisted that all apprehensions from Catholic power must be unfounded; the moment they were members of the constitution, their union, which now appeared formidable, would dissolve for want of a common object, they would then be interested in the same measures with Protestants, and be no longer anxious for separate views; the admission of a number (which could never be more than ten or twenty) of them into Parliament, would secure the establishment by the certainty of detaching so many men of education and property, from an interest hostile to that establishment; none but such men could be chosen, and the whole body of the people would be thus mutually attached. He was not so vain as to hope that he could remove every doubt or prejudice upon this subject; they were in many too deeply rooted for his efforts, but he thought it his duty, to endeavour by conciliating all men to save this country from the arms of an hostile nation, and from her sentiments more deadly than her arms; he therefore would move, “that Roman Catholics should be permitted to hold seats in Parliament.”

Mr. MASON said, that no man had a more sincere regard for Roman Catholics than he had; he had been their friend when they had very few in that House, and he must bear testimony to their character by saying, that never was there a set of men more oppressed and more loyal; he knew them attached to the constitution and loyal to the sovereign; but though he must say this, he could not help being surprized at what had fallen from the last speaker; in his whole speech he seemed to forget that we had a church establishment, and that this establishment was intimately connected with the constitution? and surely Roman Catholics could not wish well to it. He could not conceive what was meant by admitting the Roman Catholics to a participation of the constitution—while they were the majority they must have the whole, if any; they could not call it a share of power, but a surrender of dominion.

Mr. DENIS BROWNE rose to order—there was no question before the House—but to set the right honourable gentlemen right he would just say, that in all the civil wars of Ireland from Elizabeth to James II. he defied any man to shew that there was any contention for religious opinions, or any object but civil rights.

The bill was then read a second time, and on the question for committal,

The PROVOST said, as to the clause of the bill respecting the university, he should give the House very little trouble upon that point; he was sure there would be no difference of opinion—every man must rejoice at any thing which would tend to the dissipation of prejudices—and if in what he was going to say, he could effect the abolition of any one prejudice, he should consider it the happiest moment of his life. The restraints upon Catholics had originated from the necessity of opposing a combination of two very formidable powers—the pretenders to his Majesty's throne, and the bishop of Rome; connected and dependent on this combination were certain very dangerous opinions and doctrines hostile to a free constitution; on one side indefeasible hereditary right and non-resistance—on the other, the Pope's infallibility, his unlimited power of absolution from oaths, from sin, and the doctrine that faith was not to be kept with heretics; these, he was happy to say, were doctrines at this day not only universally reprobated, but utterly abjured. They could no longer exist, for the limits of the power of the king, and the obedience of the subject were now perfectly defined and settled: the claims of the abdicated family no longer exist; the family itself was hardly the shadow of a name; the temporal power of the Pope was annihilated and disclaimed, and his spiritual dominion was at this moment insufficient for the discipline of the Roman Catholic church.

Protestants should not therefore be any longer jealous or suspicious, when the causes of jealousy and suspicion were completely removed; the Roman Catholics had for a century been uniformly loyal and peaceable—they had done nothing under all the restraints laid upon them to disturb the established government; and surely this conduct deserved some return? And here he begged leave to quote the sentiments of a man, who had, in his opinion, written the most just, candid, fair and temperate work he ever read—an History of England; the author was a Dr. Somerville, and he believed a Dissenter; the words were, that “though James II. kept up a considerable correspondence, and had assurances of assistance from many persons in England, yet amongst all his papers there never appeared any offer of support or invitation (after the articles of Limerick had been signed) to the abdicated monarch from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, who had done so much in his cause.”

Perhaps he was partial to this author from its being exactly his own opinion; for during fifty years experience that he himself had had of the confidence of those in the government of affairs in this kingdom, he never heard of any rising or intended rising amongst those people; for the excesses of the lower orders he did not consider as insurrection. Lord Chesterfield, when he came over here as Lord Lieutenant, was much prejudiced by what he had heard in England of Roman Catholics; but when he came to converse with, and to observe them, he changed his opinion. The commons, on the alarm of a rebellion actually existing in England, wished to strengthen the hands of government by violent measures against Roman Catholics; they were opposed by the immediate friends of government in that House—and when the Lord Lieutenant was urged by representations of the dangers of Popery, he declared that “he knew of but one dangerous Papist in the whole country—a very beautiful young lady of that persuasion.” What could have inspired him with this confidence, but a retrospect of their conduct for fifty years before, and particularly that when a rebellion raged in Great Britain in 1715, they gave not the least interruption or disturbance to Government; and if he could confide in them on fifty years experience, should we not now, after the lapse of more than a century—

[Here the right honourable gentleman finding himself unable any longer to offer his sentiments to the House, was indulged with permission to speak sitting.]

He would now consider the expediency of the measure :

He then took an historial review of the subject, insisting that all the misfortunes of this country has arisen from the disunion of its inhabitants; that as soon as their nation had become united,

the great objects of liberty were attained ; and that the Catholic emancipation had always been the earnest of Irish liberty. To prevent the influx of small freeholders, and any disparity between Protestants and Catholics he would wish that 10*l.* freeholds were made indispensable to voters of any persuasion : And concluded with these words :—

Let us not be like the churlish eldest son mentioned in Scripture, who refused to enter his father's house, because his younger brother was received into favour : let us rather consider our gracious sovereign as speaking to us in the words of that benevolent father—“ *Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine ; but this thy brother was dead and is alive, was lost and is found.*”

Mr. FORBES would not have spoken, as a majority of the House appeared to have been favourable to the principle of the bill, but that he thought it the duty of every man in the habits of engaging in debate to deliver his opinion on a measure so momentous as the present. Much, it was said, had been granted to the Catholics within these thirteen years—he subscribed to this assertion, and therefore it was that he thought more should be granted to them ; first, because none of the evils so emphatically predicted as consequences of that indulgence had followed. He well remembered the declarations into which the extreme zeal of gentlemen in that House had betrayed them in the year 1778, and with what confidence it was asserted, that by enabling the Catholic to purchase real property, Parliament in effect surrendered every thing that was dear to a Protestant. Secondly, because the principle established by the act of 1778 and 1782, of engaging the inhabitants of all descriptions and persuasions in one common interest, had been productive of such beneficial consequences to the country, that it became incumbent on the House, as a matter of duty and policy, to extend as much as possible the operation of that principle. Thirdly, because having already enabled them to acquire real property, and to practice at the bar, we should admit them to a participation of that influence in the government of their country, to which by the constitution that species of property entitles them, and eminent talents in such a leading profession naturally aspire ; if some vent is not given to the ambition inseparable from such situations, if it has not some subject on which it may repose, some object, by which its views may be terminated, this combination of wealth and talents will acquire an irregular and powerful authority, which must infallibly operate against the peace, credit and stability of every government. Though the deprivation of the elective franchise could not be justified ; yet certainly better arguments could be urged in its support at the period, in which it first took effect, than for its continuance now.

By the acts of Anne, Catholics had been disabled from granting or accepting of freeholds; the principle the legislature then sought to establish was, that Catholics should not possess real property; the act of George I. therefore, which deprived them only of that, which was an appendage of what it was determined they should not possess, was not then so rigorous as the continuance of it must prove at this period, when those acts of Anne are repealed. But it may be objected, he said, first, that his argument tends to shew the necessity of admitting the Catholics into a participation of every privilege of the constitution. In answer to this, he should observe, that, notwithstanding the bill conferred important and substantial benefits on the Catholics, yet he should have considered the right honourable gentleman, who introduced it, as a wiser politician, and an abler statesman, had he granted the whole extent of the prayer of the Catholic petition; and he would have acted so in a similar situation, and declared his intention to support the motion of a learned gentleman [Mr. Knox] for a free communication of privilege. Next, it may be urged, that he has not answered the objection to extending to the Catholic the elective franchise under a qualification so low as forty shillings. It was his wish that no freeholder of that description should be permitted to vote, but so long as a Protestant forty shilling freeholder was suffered to be an elector, if a Catholic, having a freehold of equal value, had not the same privilege, the principle of the bill, which was union and coalition was falsified, and under a professed intention of incorporation, a very considerable portion of three millions of people would be excluded. What is the evil which the bill purports to remedy?—That Catholics and Protestants, inhabiting the same island, and subjects of the same king, are a distinct people, and how do the friends to the high qualification of twenty pounds propose to unite them, by maintaining in a great measure the old and invidious distinction? for the cause of the distinction is a certain penal law, and some gentlemen profess to remove this cause by continuing the greatest part of that law on the statute-book. He expressed an earnest hope that the Parliament of Ireland would not, on this subject, prove itself so much inferior to the rest of Europe in liberality and information, as to be attached to a system of penal laws against religion. If any gentleman could prove, that such laws ever produced any salutary effect, or that any legislature ever attained by such means its professed object, (unless it was so weak or so wicked as to be intent on the destruction or extermination of its own subjects) he would retract his opinion. In Ireland, he asked, if those laws had attained their object? It must be answered, they had not; they had not produced an uniformity of worship, for the number of the Catholics amounted at this day to three millions; they had not contributed to promote the prosperity of the country; on the contrary, it had advanced in proportion to their

relaxation. Never were those laws more justly characterized than by Lord Camden, who declared them to be an heap of contradiction and absurdity, and to have contributed much to the corruption of the morals of the people of Ireland. King William, it was said, was a friend to this system: the contrary was the fact; he reprobated it, and often declared it as his opinion, that the people were to be attached to his government by conciliation, not penalty; that the situation of the disaffected in Ireland was different from that of persons of a similar description in England; in the former country their offences had been amply and adequately punished by a considerable confiscation of property—a circumstance which had not obtained in the latter.

He then adverted to the means which ought to be pursued in the present situation of Ireland, and observed that a Protestant legislator would endeavour to affect the union at this period so desirable, by adopting such a system of policy, as might induce similar habits of thinking among all the people of this kingdom; but such habits can never originate from laws, establishing a contrariety of interests, and inequality of privilege, between the subjects of the same government. Let us, he said, send the Protestant and Catholic to the hustings at elections on equal terms; when they are accustomed to agree in the disposal of the most important of their temporal concerns, it is not probable that they will separate on account of any difference of opinion respecting theological doctrines. He objected to the suggested limitation of franchise to twenty pounds, as such a measure argued a want of confidence in the Catholics. And respecting those who distrusted the Catholics after they had taken every test, which political jealousy could devise, after a conduct so irreprehensible during a century, he expressed his apprehensions of the impracticability of inspiring such gentlemen with confidence in their brethren of that persuasion. If even the behaviour of the Catholics since the Revolution had been subject to exceptions, as was contended by one gentleman, he appealed to the candour and judgment of the House, whether it was fair to argue, that what before happened under certain circumstances, would probably occur under others totally different; that the conduct of the Catholics would be the same when liberated, as when oppressed; and that the religious animosities excited by the penal laws would continue after these laws ceased to exist. But if on the contrary, the Catholics under that irritation of mind, naturally created by a confiscation of their property, and the infliction of a multiplicity of penalties by the legislature, under the encouragement to a disaffection held out to them by the old government of France, under the influence of a strong attachment to the house of Stuart, under the powerful patronage of the court of Rome, under a deprivation of civil as well as political liberty,

preserved their fidelity to Government inviolate for these last hundred years, can it be urged with any appearance of reason or argument that those people, when all those circumstances, which could have prompted them to acts of disloyalty, cease to exist, will endeavour to subvert a free constitution at the moment of their admission to a full participation of its benefits, and to which, while excluded from those benefits, they adhered. He observed, respecting the confiscation of property, though it unavoidably must have irritated the minds of the Catholics at the period in which it occurred, yet he considered such a measure amply justified by the policy and practise of every government after a revolution, and in Ireland absolutely necessary. He entered into a history of the origin of the deprivation of the elective franchise, and observed that the friends to that measure must rely for its justification on some other principle than the delinquency of the Catholics; as the most decided and unsuspected testimonies of their good conduct at that period could be adduced.

In the correspondence of King James the Second, after the Revolution, lately published, it appears, that he placed not the least reliance on, or entertained any expectation of assistance from the Irish, at the same time that he expressed a well-founded hope of support in Great Britain; a correspondence which he held with persons of the most exalted rank and station in the court of King William; and Mr. Forbes asked, are the descendants of such persons to enjoy distinctions and honours in the sister kingdom, while the posterity of the unoffending Catholic in Ireland are to be denied the common privilege of a free constitution.

In the year 1762, the persons principally connected with the government of this kingdom, declared in one of the Houses of Parliament, that after the most careful inspection of the papers of Murray, secretary to the Pretender, during the last rebellion in Scotland, the least trace could not be discovered of any inhabitant of Ireland being concerned in promoting the object of that rebellion, or effectuating the plans of the Pretender, and this declaration we find corroborated by all the communications of Lord Chesterfield, chief governor of Ireland, in the year 1745 with the English administration; who, though he gave the assent to the law confirming the deprivation of the elective franchise, reprobates in most unequivocal terms the impolicy and rigour of the popery-laws, and laments the spirit of intolerance which at that period prevailed in the Irish Parliament. He next considered, whether the law against the elective franchise was dictated by any necessity, and stated from histories of unquestionable authority, that when King James summoned a parliament in Ireland after his abdication, the number of Catholic freeholders in this kingdom was so very limited, as not to exceed in some counties ten. After the Revolution, real property belonging to Catholics, to the amount of one million and an half, was forfeited,

and the acts of Anne disabled any person of that religion from acquiring a freehold, which acts it was worthy of observation, were passed before the Catholics were deprived of the elective franchise. From these circumstances, he said, he was warranted to infer, that this measure did not proceed from necessity, but originated either in the spirit of monopoly or the influence of prejudice. This act has been styled by some a part of the constitution to which we ought pertinaciously to adhere; with as much reason and argument, might it be contended that martial law, which obtained during the civil war, or the dependency of the judges, (because King William considered himself, by the critical and peculiar situation of England, obliged to reject a bill for rendering the judges independent,) or the suspension of the habeas-corpus act; because such a law was esteemed expedient in England, during the existence of the rebellion in 1745, was part of the constitution. These were all temporary suspensions of an undeniable right, and justified only by the necessity of the times; when that necessity ceased, as he should presently shew respecting the act in question, it had; this act no more than those he had stated should any longer remain on the statute-book. The petition of the Catholics to the King had been animadverted on, he thought severely and unjustly. By the second article of the treaty of Limerick, the estates of freehold and inheritance of persons of certain descriptions in five counties were to be restored to them, together with all the rights, titles, interests, privileges, and immunities, which they held and enjoyed in the reign of Charles II. those articles were signed by the Lords Justices, ratified by King William, and some of them, and the second article among the rest, received a sanction from Parliament; and the offence of the Catholics was a statement that as part of the people of their religion were restored by that article to their properties, together with all rights, privileges, &c. enjoyed in the reign of Charles II. and as the elective franchise was one of those rights, which they then possessed, that the act depriving Catholics universally of their franchise was an infringement of that treaty; though he said, he was free to confess that neither the articles themselves nor any degree of sanction they may have received from parliament in the reign of King William, could restrain a succeeding parliament from passing the act in question; yet he should ever maintain that it was inconsistent with the honour and justice of Parliament to pass any law on the subject of the elective franchise, without making an exception in favour of those, who were the objects of the second article, unless the Catholics after the surrender had forfeited their title to the benefit of this article by some new act of delinquency.

He adverted next to some of the arguments of a learned member [Dr. Duigenan] on a former debate on this subject, who, though actuated by the best motives, as he [Mr. Forbes] was confi-

dent, was certainly not supported by historical fact in some of his observations, in order to prove the disaffection of the Catholics after the surrender the learned member stated, that though offers were made to them by Government and General Ginkle, to remain at home in pursuit of their different occupations, or to enlist, those offers almost to a man were rejected; whereas if the learned member had pursued his own authority [Harris] one page beyond his quotation, he must have found that nineteen Irish regiments submitted, and were taken into the pay of the English army. As to the learned member's other objection to the petition, for stiling those articles a treaty, which he alledges was a capitulation agreed on from ill-judged and unseasonable mercy, as the besieged were but a set of ragamuffins enclosed, like rats in a trap, from whence they had no possibility of escaping, nor could have made a long or effectual resistance. Had the honourable gentleman resorted to Leland, the most impartial historian of those transactions, the fact must have appeared to him totally different; for Leland expressly says, that the season was far advanced, the continuance of the siege dangerous, and the event precarious; and respecting the incapacity of the besieged to make a long resistance he [Mr. Forbes] referred to these words of Harris: "the surrender happened at a favourable conjuncture; a fleet sent by France to relieve Limerick, arrived in Dingle-bay a day or two after the articles were signed, consisting of eighteen ships of war, six fire-ships, twenty great vessels of burden, ten thousand stands of arms, and three thousand men," a succour, which according to Leland, they had reason to expect. Under all these circumstances, he thought it could not be denied, that the Catholics were justified in stating, in their petition, that the king and the country received a valuable consideration for any privileges secured by the articles to that body of people.

He lamented that the learned member appeared, instead of attending the public mind in its progress on this subject, by a species of negative industry to have given his own mind such a retrograde direction, that the principles he avowed and the apprehensions he expressed relative to the effects of this measure, were but ill adapted to the situation of this country and the temper of this assembly at present; and would have suited better the House of Commons, which sat soon after the Revolution, whose terrors and prejudices respecting Catholics were so great as to induce them with much gravity to entertain a petition of the Protestant coal porters of Dublin, stating that Darby Ryan, a notorious Papist, carried on the business of a coal porter, much to their injury and the danger of the Protestant interests; and this petition was with great solemnity referred to the grand committee of grievances. The same House of Commons made an order that no Papist was to be admitted into the gallery of the House; were that order en-

forced this night, we must have employed a serjeant at arms, who was either an expert physiognomist or a profound theologian.

He next proceeded to consider the consequences of excluding a considerable portion of the Catholics by a limitation of franchise to twenty pounds. The only tendency of such a measure must be, he said, to embody excluded Catholics for the purpose of destroying the limitation. An honourable baronet [Sir Lawrence Parsons] had laid down a position, to the truth of which he subscribed without hesitation, though he denied his inference; namely that the more points the Catholics had to gain, the more inducements they had to enter into combinations; but he differed from him in the application of this position; for he said, that so far from supporting his proposition of limitation of franchise, he considered that the argument of the honourable baronet tended to prove the necessity either of a total incorporation or exclusion; but the truth of the position could not be controverted, therefore he should endeavour to leave the Catholics as few points to gain as possible. Nothing was so dangerous in a state as an unequal distribution of constitutional privilege; the most enlightened writers on the ancient government of France attributed the despotism, under which the people of that country groaned, while England, sprung from the same Northern Hive, was free, to this circumstance, and to this cause, he said, we may attribute the inflammation of the minds of the people of that country, whose oppression provoked them to frenzy, and precipitated them into measures, which have effected the extinction of all the privileged orders and constituted authorities in that country. He exhorted the House to embrace the opportunity of attaching the Catholic to the constitution and government, which the reduced situation of every power to which he was habituated to look up and respect, afforded. He would, for argument sake, suppose that a civil commotion should arise in England; though he trusted that there was not cause to apprehend such an event; yet as Europe was confessedly pregnant with some great political event, a wise legislator would take every precaution. If the Catholics were not completely assimilated with Protestants in respect to political advantages, it required not much sagacity to foresee in case of serious disturbances in Great Britain, the effects of such an inequality of condition; that the parties in Great Britain would be bidding at each other on the subject of Catholic emancipation; whereas if we now attach that description of people to government, and unite them with the Protestants, the whole people of Ireland might act as a great body to support the balance of power in the empire against contending factions, and might possibly prevent them from proceeding to extremities, or at least speedily tranquillize them. It should also be considered, by those who opposed this measure, and yet were deeply interested in the prosperity of Ireland, that nothing was more unlikely than the

situation of Europe and America, now, from what it was when the popery laws were first enacted: In America, the free exercise of the Catholic religion was not incompatible with the full enjoyment of political liberty; when the agitation, which at present prevails in Europe, had subsided, there was every reason to expect that the contention between governments and their subjects would terminate in the establishment of free constitutions in the form of limited monarchies; and an extension of political privileges to persons of all religions. Such an event, as well as the encreasing prosperity of America, must operate as a most powerful inducement to the Catholics of this kingdom to emigrate; and an enlightened legislature would provide against such powerful attractions, by securing a decided preference on the comparison of the condition of Catholics in Ireland and in other countries

He observed, that some gentlemen had said, the Catholics were premature in their application, and the time will come when they can be gratified with satisfaction to all parties. He asked, how long the Catholics have to wait? when were their opponents to overcome their prejudices? what was the term and nature of Catholic probation? This no gentleman had defined. Suppose in this awful and anxious interval, the Catholic, impelled by the prevailing propensity of the times for enquiring into the nature and relations between the governors and governed, should examine into our right of excluding him from the elective franchise, how could we justify it, placing it, for argument's sake, even on as strong a foundation as we can, that of the acts of Anne, to which at best, though not very strong, he thought this act is not entitled. Those popery laws were enacted against Catholics, not merely because they were Catholics, but because Catholics were jacobites; the family of the Stuarts were now extinct, the cause of the exclusion had ceased; therefore to continue these laws longer would in fact be to re-enact them. But it has been urged that a Catholic enjoys as many privileges of the constitution, as a number of Protestants; that he is in the possession of civil liberty, though not of political. He asked, whether, in 1782, the Protestant would have been contented with such a condition? whether he did not consider political so essential to the preservation of civil liberty, that he was determined to risk his life and fortune for the attainment of the former? what a sacrifice had America made on the same principle? and had the Protestants a right to urge a doctrine and principles against their Catholic brethren in such palpable contradiction to their own professions and their own conduct? It has been argued, that if Catholics are not capable of voting, they are not in a worse situation than many Protestants, who are not electors—a clear distinction exists between the situations of the two descriptions of men; if a Protestant has interest to obtain his freedom in a corporation, or can raise by

any means a sum sufficient to purchase a forty shilling freehold, he may be in possession of the elective franchise, not so with the Catholic; the Protestant is excluded by accident, the Catholic by something next to an impossibility with a conscientious man, as he can only purchase his franchise by the sacrifice of his eternal salvation.

He applied himself to the argument principally insisted on by the friends to the limitation of 20*l.* that the priests would work on the superstition and poverty of the lower class of people: In answer to this he observed, as it was notorious that all the priests in the kingdom, had taken the oath of allegiance, this argument supposed that their tenets justified a dispensation of that oath; therefore he would examine whether such a doctrine ever universally prevailed among the Roman Catholic clergy, and whether it obtained at this day, even in Ireland at a period when the clergy of that religion were considered as the slaves of bigotry and superstition, so early as the reign of Elizabeth and James I. He could assert from incontestible evidence of history that a considerable party of the Catholic clergy professed and taught, with firmness and vigour, in support of the government to which they had sworn allegiance, a civil obedience to the crown; hence in all the wars of Elizabeth, several of the Romish profession were distinguished in the service of the crown. The doctrine of the Pope's power to dispense with oaths of allegiance has been two centuries since renounced and abjured by the principal Catholic universities in Europe; which renunciation was, in the year 1790, repeated by those universities, and has since also been adopted by public and solemn declarations of the Catholic clergy in Great Britain and Ireland, an act assented to in the most explicit terms, by the present Pope in the year 1791. He called on gentlemen, who availed themselves of this argument, to state any possible advantage, which the priests could propose to themselves, by inciting the lower class of people to disaffection to the established government. Had they any prospect of protection from their old and natural patrons; the family of the Stuarts was no more: the power of the Pope was so completely and notoriously dissolved, that he should consider it as an insult on the understandings of his hearers, were he to impute any authority to a character of such imbecility, who was at this moment like a mendicant friar, supplicating the protection of every Protestant prince in Europe. From France the priests could not any longer expect support; the Catholic clergy of this country abhorred the principles of the French, as much as that people detested every species of church establishment: though the French government might assume a form different from that, which now prevailed, it was not probable that the present race would overcome their indisposition to the clergy. Under these circumstances, the priests must regard as their only protectors, the men of rank and property of their persuasion in

this country; and he should endeavour to prove presently, that it was not probable that men of that description would aid them in a scheme, which must terminate in the confusion of all property, and a system of indiscriminate depredation by the lower class of the community; neither was it probable that any body of men, according to the prevailing opinions of this day, could be found so stupid or absurd, as to erect another popish hierarchy, after having rescued themselves from the yoke of one, under which a great part of Europe had groaned for so many centuries. When gentlemen affected to apprehend danger from the lower class of people, they reversed the order of things; it was an established maxim, that the fashion of opinions and habits descended from the higher to the lower class in society; but according to the present mode of reasoning, a very inferior description of the people were to give the tone of sentiment and conduct to the whole of their persuasion; he was confident that a little experience would prove that the bill would produce a contrary effect, that the tenant by its means would maintain a more intimate connection with his landlord, and as three-fourths of the landed property of the kingdom was possessed by Protestants, they would retain an ascendancy. No circumstance can occur in this country to render the Catholic freeholder so unlike those of his persuasion in other countries at this day, as not to prefer his temporal interests to the maintenance of any theological doctrines: respecting the superior orders of Catholics, the assertion that they in general were such bigots to their faith as to sacrifice their most important interests in this world to the speculative tenets of their religion, could not be maintained by the history of the latter periods of Europe. Experience has proved that men of all religions, who have a share in the property possessed by every community, will rally without distinction round that property for its preservation. Even amidst the violent contentions, with which this kingdom was distracted in the last century, and which have been by many imputed to a religious origin, it is an undoubted fact, that persons of considerable fortune of the Catholic persuasion, entered with reluctance into a resistance to the then existing government, and not, till they were forced by that government, for the purpose of enriching itself by forfeitures; these very men were found anxious to desist from a continuance of hostility, and disposed to forego the splendor of an establishment of their religion, in order to secure that property; and in contempt of the anathemas of the Pope embodying to attack his legate, but instead of exposing the fallacy and weakness of this argument, and endeavouring to prove that the apprehensions entertained from doctrines of faith, on which it was impossible the Catholics could act, were groundless, he would adduce one instance which must be conclusive; it was derived from the very source or centre of popish superstition, and resorting to the court of Rome, esta-

blish from incontestible evidence, that even there the ambition of the temporal prince had prevailed over all spiritual considerations; he stated by authentic memorials, lately produced to the world, of the transactions of the courts of Europe immediately preceding the Revolution, it was evident that the Pope, actuated by resentment against Lewis XIV. on account of an invasion of his temporal authority, consented to the expulsion of James II. from the throne of these kingdoms, and that the successor to him, who filled the papal chair at the Revolution, persevered in the same system, though no monarchs ever sacrificed more to the popish religion than Lewis and James. He concluded with declaring his decided approbation of the bill, in as much as it repealed laws, the continuance of which could not be justified, and by its tendency to unite the inhabitants of this kingdom of all descriptions, must make the Irish, in a political sense, a people, and restore the country to its native energies.

Dr. BROWNE entered into a long explanation of the articles of Limerick, and said that those articles had not been infringed, and that the charge against Parliament on that head was unfounded. He objected not to the principle of the bill, though to some of its clauses he could not subscribe; he could not think of letting in such a numerous, ignorant, bigoted rabble as Roman Catholic 40s. freeholders must be; he perfectly accorded with the idea of giving Roman Catholics the benefit of education in the university, but thought it would be contrary to the oaths imposed by the university statutes, and contrary to the intention of the founders and benefactors of the university, to transfer to Papists any of the authority or emoluments which they had intended to promote the Protestant religion.

Mr. HOLMES said a few words, declaring his assent to the bill, and his opinion, that the elective franchise should be restrained in all its parts.

Mr. DAY agreed perfectly with the Provost, that the ills of this country had arisen principally from the people of the country secluding themselves within different pales.

In consequences of these divisions, the Roman Catholics of Ireland had long felt the legislation of the country only by the stripes it inflicted. They had suffered patiently, yet could not the silent eloquence of their sufferings soften the hearts of their countrymen, till George III. ascended the throne of these kingdoms to bless every class of his subjects, and influenced by real religion, had pointed out the partial repeal of this code. He was the first English monarch since the Revolution, who made relaxation a principle of this government; yet under him the Protestant ascendancy had been preserved.

No man was more strongly attached to this ascendancy than he—it was connected with the state, and inseparable from it; but he could distinguish between the ascendancy and a struggle for power and monopoly which enshrined itself in the altar of the church. What was there in that monopoly that the House should struggle for its existence? He was not a political swindler who, in 1782, invited the Catholics to unite with him in demanding a constitution, and in 1793 would deny a share in the benefits of that constitution. To coalesce with the Catholics he thought was now necessary for the safety of the state; nor was aught to be dreaded from that coalition. It was not the Catholics who were to be dreaded, but those who turned the pulpit into a rostrum for propagating seditious principles; those whose only grievance was monarchy, and who made religion only an instrument to overturn it. How were these men to be guarded against? Only by throwing open the constitution to the Catholics, who would, no doubt, be zealous to defend it against those levellers.

He exhorted the House to learn from America the wisdom of timely concession. America exhibited another good example, of equal liberty, and growing happiness, where popery is not only tolerated, but established by law. No danger was to be feared, that by granting these privileges to the Catholics, the government of this country would cease to the Protestant. It was our connection with Britain which made the island Protestant, and it is that which will keep it so while that connection is cherished.

He then alluded to Mr. Byrne's letter, which, he said, at least must be called highly indiscreet, and calculated to disturb the quiet of the country. It was censurable, as it promoted an appeal to an assembly of such a kind as if frequently recurred to, or indulged, would reduce the authority of that House, and render them nothing more than the register of their own edicts.

He declared himself friendly to a total emancipation; he would not leave a seminal principle of discontent existing, from which mischief and discord might spring, he would place his Catholic fellow-subjects on the same high ground as their Protestant brethren; yet he confessed, he would have been better pleased had the change begun earlier, that it might have proceeded gradually.

It had been asked by some honourable gentlemen, whether the minister knew that the Catholics would be contented with this bill. He could say, from very respectable authority, that they would; that they felt very deep gratitude for the benefits it conferred, and that they would express that gratitude in addresses on the subject: if any thing yet remained which restricted their liberty, they hoped it would dissipate before the warm rays of growing liberality. As to the prejudices of Papists, of which so much had been said, they were fast decreasing, and if

popery should go down for twenty years more, as it did the last twenty years, there would remain little difference between them and Protestants, but in name.

He concluded by declaring, that the bill had his hearty concurrence, as being happily calculated to give general content, to establish peace and unanimity, to call forth the energies of the nation, and to give stability to the government of the country. He embraced it as the Magna Charta of the Catholics of Ireland, and a pledge of holy fraternity.

Mr. BROOKE (of Donegal) said, no man felt a more ardent desire to confer upon Roman Catholics every benefit consistent with the security of the Protestant establishment: This was not a sentiment lately adopted by him—he had manifested it so early as 1788. He was farther induced to conciliate the Roman Catholics, because it was his Majesty's recommendation, and for that recommendation he had the highest respect; he would therefore vote for the bill, but he hoped it would not extend to forty-shilling freeholders the right of voting; if it should, he believed, from the multitude that would be let in, very few gentlemen of landed property would be mad enough to canvas a county, or to stand an election; and excluding men of landed property from parliament would not, in his opinion, be a very advantageous reform. It had been said that power being gradually imparted to Roman Catholics, it could not for several years to come operate with any very great force. He hoped the Roman Catholics would use their power with moderation; but he was an unwise legislator who did not guard against possibilities, and a worse who did not guard against consequences.

Mr. R. SHERIDAN. I rather rise to avoid silence than to seek attention; it is a subject on which I do not like to expatiate—my judgment condemns what my heart would grant. I have endeavoured to inform my mind upon this subject, and I am determined to act as a member of parliament should do, with unbiassed coolness and inflexible honesty: and though, Sir, I have often heard the words "three millions of people," echoed through this House, I hope we will not forget the one million of Protestants who hold their privileges by the same right that our sovereign wears his crown, or that we, whom they have delegated to maintain these rights, assemble here in Parliament.

It has been said, Sir, that the king has recommended this bill to us—I have ever considered that the constitution has wisely placed between the Throne and the Parliament responsible ministers, who are answerable for the measures they propose; upon this idea depends all freedom of speech in Parliament, and there-

fore I will consider the speech of the minister using his Majesty's name.

A gentleman has quoted a part of his Majesty's coronation oath. By the coronation oath, established at that which heretofore was called the Glorious Revolution, his Majesty swears that he will, to the utmost of his power, maintain and preserve the Protestant religion by law established; and whatever Mr. Pitt, or his necessary-man, Mr. Dundas, may put into the speech in favour of Roman Catholics, it must have this extent, so far as the same is compatible with the safety of the Protestant establishment—no more: In this sense I am ready to embrace the Roman Catholics. But does not this bill endanger the Protestant interest? It does—if you give to three times their number the elective franchise, they must be overwhelmed. What will then avail the barrier you think you are now erecting, by denying to them the representative right? They will tell you, it is absurd to say they may be electors, but they may not be representatives; that they are competent to delegate, but incompetent to execute; and therefore by what you grant render what you withhold insecure! Sir, if they cannot sit in Parliament themselves, they will find equivocating, accommodating Protestants, worse than Papists, to represent them.

Perhaps, Sir, I shall not live to see the utter abolition of the Protestant ascendancy, though that glorious establishment which came in with the Revolution, to which England owes her liberty and her prosperity, which is congenial to and blended with our constitution will not, I fear, long survive; however, Sir, I never will give a vote injurious to it; and I call upon this House, in the name of the Protestant electors who sent us here, not to desert their interest.

Mr. HOBART. There being so little difference upon the principle of the bill, and indeed no objection to going into a committee upon it, I should not have thought it necessary to have troubled the House with a single word, were it not for what fell from the honourable gentleman who spoke last.

That honourable gentleman has truly stated that no man has a right to argue, that a subject debated in this House is supposed to be influenced by the command of his Majesty; his Majesty in his good pleasure may recommend a subject to the consideration of Parliament—Parliament in their duty and affection will give the most respectful and attentive consideration to what his Majesty recommends to their notice; but when the measure comes before Parliament in the shape of a bill, it is then the measure of the member who introduces it, and his Majesty's name is no longer to be used in its support; and therefore the gentleman who spoke early in the debate was not justified in saying this bill was by his Majesty's command.

I agree also with the honourable gentleman, that his Majesty has recommended to us the care of the Protestant establishment, and that it is our duty to guard it from injury; and therefore, Sir, the question is, how far can we go in behalf of the Roman Catholics without shaking the security of the Protestant establishment? On this question, Sir, I have consulted with some of the most experienced and best informed men in this country, and it did appear to them, that the measure now offered would give effectual relief to the Roman Catholics, without shaking the Protestant establishment; the Roman Catholics themselves feel it so; and I am convinced it will not injure the Protestant establishment. Though I differ from some gentlemen, for whom I entertain the highest regard, I know that what we are doing will essentially serve the country; it will conciliate the Roman Catholics; it will cement a common union of interest and affection amongst his Majesty's subjects; and enable this country to repel all her enemies.

He was ashamed to have troubled the House so long, as there had not appeared any difference of opinion on the principle of the bill. He would make but a single observation more, a learned gentleman had said, why not accept the tests which the Roman Catholics offered themselves? For that very reason, because they freely offered to take tests, he thought it would be unnecessary to impose them.

Mr. B. PONSONBY begged leave to take up the attention of the House a few moments. He said, he felt rather hurt in finding himself obliged to express sentiments different from those other gentlemen, for whom he entertained the highest respect, had expressed before him. He would, however, he said, not consider the bill in the same sense other gentlemen had done. They consider it only as far as it will tend to affect the political and social interests of this country: he thought it every man's duty to come forward and take it in another view—as it respects our connection with Great Britain. That every member in the House was under a necessity of admitting that that connection must be materially affected by such concessions. And why? It will throw the whole Catholic interest on one side: It will drive us into direct opposition to England—may not Catholics be admitted in England as well as in Ireland? Why are they not? The natural and necessary consequence will be, it will drive every man having an interest in the church into the arms of administration. It will subject him to Government influence. Will not the Catholic then, when admitted to the elective franchise and to a share in the legislature, complain of influence?

Mr. G. PONSONBY. Sir, it will be acknowledged I entered with reluctance on a subject, on which I would avoid saying any thing. It was for this reason I delayed declaring my sentiments, after what I have already said upon the present question, until I had first heard so many other gentlemen explain themselves fully on this very important business, I am therefore, Sir, anxious that every gentleman in the House should be convinced by what I have to offer, as far as I can flatter myself with being able to effect—If I err in judgment I can say it is an error of the understanding, not of the heart. As to that body of men who are the subject of the bill, no one can have a higher opinion of their merits than I have; yet I would not wish to be thought intriguing by popularity. I wish to give my thoughts freely, without disguise or reserve, to see the same mode pursued by those who have spoken before me. Was I the person who voted against the Catholic bill? No. Was I the one who ever objected to our Catholic brethren's participating of those rights to which I am convinced every man in this House does in his soul believe them fairly entitled? No. I would rejoice to see that no distinctions were known in Ireland, but that of a good or bad citizen: But at the same time I utterly disavow giving any consent to the bill as it stands.

The bill in its present form, and the patrons of the bill, propose to give all rights whatsoever, civil and military, to the Catholic; to put him in all respects on the same footing with the Protestant.

Now, Sir, I say, that that bill itself is the most absurd, the most unjustifiable, the most unconstitutional bill, ever yet brought into this House. It is, I say and will maintain, the greatest nuisance ever brought into Parliament.

It is, Sir, utterly impossible, it is inconsistent with reason, to give the great body of the inhabitants of any country under any reasonable government any portion of political power; do you propose to give to three-fourths of your people the power of your House of Commons, that power without whose aid your sovereign cannot undertake a war, or if he does, will undertake it in vain, for who will furnish him with supplies? That power which is the grand machine that directs the motion of the whole nation.

Will the Catholic gentleman, a man of genius, of knowledge and information, when he sees the meanest man in the state, possessed of every privilege he himself has; will he, think you, rest his claims here, or will he acquiesce in your decision? No, And this will be the consequence, if you give the Catholic a right of suffrage, and deny him the right of representation. When you distribute thus partially, the more eagerly will every man demand what he thinks is still due to him. When, therefore, you give the Catholic this power of suffrage, will you per-

suade him to be content, and to ask no more? You will, by giving only a part, confirm him in the belief that he has a right to more; and what still remains will have in his eyes ten times more value than its intrinsic worth. What was it first formed those separate and distinct interests of Protestants and Catholics? Not virtue nor wisdom. It was political jealousy, and political iniquity. It may be fairly affirmed there were no Protestants before the time of Henry the Eighth. At the conquest the conquerors and the conquered were of the same persuasion as to religion.

In the reign of Charles the First, the old and new Irish formed a complete confederacy, the revolution formed a separation, and confirmed the power of the Protestant, in opposition to that of the Catholic. It was the policy of England, which, in order to check and govern one party by another, that made separate interests. It was the policy of England, watchful of that division, that forbid Catholics and Protestants to intermarry. It was the same policy that forbid them to be educated together; in short to participate in the same common rights, and thus split the same country into two distinct nations. Did this system answer its purpose? No. Did the steps taken to render this separation effectual produce the salutary consequences intended by it? By no means.

What is the consequences of this pernicious policy at this day? You are not sure the Catholic mind is prepared to receive qualifications now, which you are convinced they have a right to obtain; although as a religion it is as good as any other. For what influence the court of Rome ever had in this country, is now no more; the well known attachment the people of Ireland had to the Stuart family, has ceased with its object. He then produced the resolutions published by the Catholics, and dwelt particularly on the 1st, 2d, 4th, and 6th; and on reading the 2d article, he observed on it, that the man who holds that article, is as good a Protestant as any man that sat in that House; as good a moral and political man as any subject his Majesty has. He then read that article, which he called the engine, the church had set up to batter down all legal attachment of subjects to their sovereign, the closest ties of men in society. The sentiments, Sir, contained in these resolutions, are those of true and sound Christianity, of benevolence, of humanity. Let no man tell me that a person capable of breathing such liberal sentiments, can ever be a bad Christian, a bad subject, or a bad man. It is impossible, Sir. Even were their clergy disposed, (which I am sure would not be the case) to exercise their spiritual power over the laity, or their indulgencies to the absolving them from their allegiance to their sovereign, it would be in vain—they could effect nothing, either at this, or even at any future period. In the latter case, their attachment to the house of Stuart would render any such attempt abortive; in the latter, their interest would attach them

to the established government; and administration would be glad by any favours to attach them to itself: But rest assured, that this would be so far, notwithstanding, from forming a collision between that body and administration, in opposition to you, that the Catholic would ever look up for any favour, any object he had in view, not to the king, but to you.

Was it then raising the credit of Parliament to support the penal laws, to refuse Catholic emancipation? Ah! now gentlemen on both sides, you find yourselves degraded, sunk; so degraded as to lose your sensibility and become callous to your own turpitude. You cannot produce a single Irish gentleman who concerted with you on the measure, so as to be able to reconcile your conduct to yourselves as the result of cool and impartial deliberations. But you cannot be too forward in your own opinion; for those who renounce all sense of shame know no limits either of modesty or discretion. It was wisely done, you think, to tell the Catholic he was to look to the Crown, not to this House, for his emancipation, for the right of civil society—Reflect but for a moment, and you will perceive the folly, the absurdity of leaving it in the power of administration to make a merit of granting those favours that ought to proceed from you. Let that silly bill be kicked out of the house. Let another be brought in that may not be a disgrace to your statute books, wise and comprehensive in its object—Prove yourselves men of understanding, and ready to embrace your Catholic brethren: associate them to yourselves; leave them nothing to wish; and if ever you should hereafter think you had any reason to repent of your indulgence, let them have nothing to answer. You will be told there is risque in giving a participation of power; that is dangerous. If you had been dealt with candidly, you had rather grant unsolicited, than yield with apparent reluctance; no man can say he is more nearly interested in the politics of this country than I am; men part at times unwillingly with power; and this is one of those times: but it is the effect of prejudice, not of reason or justice. Think of Irish union, think of Irish gratitude; Believe me, they will lose all recollection of former divisions; and the causes of those divisions, I pledge myself and declare on my honour, I had no connection, or the slightest communication with any Catholic ever in respect to my political sentiments; nor had any Catholic the smallest hint of my opinion of the present question before my coming this day into this House. But I know the character of Irishmen is tenderness of heart, and ardour of spirit, and it is on this principle I feel myself interested in their cause.

Mr. GEORGE OGLE got up, and with great agitation of mind, exclaimed against the bill and its principle, *in toto*. He said, he was disinclined to the committal of that bill. That Protestant ascendancy, he now saw, was only a mere phantom, be,

cause there was no honour in the Protestants themselves. He desired the great characters to consider what they were about doing. Their conduct, he considered a mean, cringing, mode of electioneering. That as to his own, however he may be mistaken, he would act up to the principles of an honest man. In whatever light the world would consider his conduct, would reflect disgrace on himself alone. He had no child to lament his father's depravity. I now ask you, do Catholics thank you? I say, no. Had the Protestants of this country a constitution? No. It is all a job of the minister. As for himself, he knew nothing of bigotry; had nothing of persecution in his nature, and therefore he the more easily reconciled it to himself never to vote for that bill.

Mr. DAVID LATOUCHE said, that having before spoke a few words on the question then before the House, he would not at present take up the time of the House, had it not been for the language he had heard from some gentlemen—hoped he would be permitted to speak a few words more—he would be very brief. He sat thirty years in that House, he said, and he thought conducted himself as independently of any faction or party as any other man in it. He had frequently voted for both parties, when he thought they were doing right—when wrong, he had voted against them. He had continual intercourse with Roman Catholics, on account of his numerous tenantry of that persuasion. He had voted for a repeal of the penal laws—would do any thing for their support; but begged leave to be understood, he never would vote for a Roman Catholic's sitting in that House, nor for giving the elective franchise to a Roman Catholic; and concluded with saying, he was ready to give so harsh a name to the conduct of other men, who shewed themselves so forward in this business, as to call it misguided.

[Here, Mr. Latouche, after unequivocally expressing his most pointed disapprobation to the bill, sat down.]

Colonel HUTCHINSON, in a speech of some length, observed that if novelty could constitute the panegyric of a country, that the bill, which was the subject of that night's debate, presented a subject new in itself, and whose issue would be either the glory or the shame of that House. We have, Sir, heard these walls re-echo with reiterated acclamations, not of exultation but reproach, when you drove many of his majesty's bravest and most faithful subjects to engage in foreign services. Are the Protestants, Sir, in mental powers superior to their Catholic brethren? superior in attachment to their country?—Neither. I know not what kind of liberty that was you had passed without their help. Those who have stated that such men have engaged in foreign services, are the very men who cannot defend their own

houses without their assistance. Read the history of Europe, you will find what they have been and what they are. Those are the men who crowded the ranks of your armies, filled your navy. What has been their reward? To be immediately condemned to slavery! Your Catholic brother is the slave. You enjoy liberty by his labour. That was constantly the happy effect of their signalizing themselves for you, and for your country. It were happy for Catholics if they could rest their claim on some firm ground. The wisest men of England and Ireland looked with indignation and abhorrence on the treatment they met with.

At first he had no idea that the Catholic franchise was necessary to their emancipation. He now thought far otherwise. The clergy, he said, presided too much on the laity, and the hierarchy, on the whole, religion has placed this country behind most of Europe. The effects of persecution have not been able to alienate the Catholic from the Protestant. But he saw the time approach, when every penal statute would be no more, when not the smallest distinction in political interests will subsist; and when every thing is done away, in the room of Protestant ascendancy, there will succeed union and friendship between the Catholic and the Protestant—hoped all former jealousies would now cease, and there would soon be an end to this only contest, which he thought would only promote the good of Ireland. You are now engaged in war with a people, haters of civil government. But you can do nothing without the aid of your Catholic brethren.

Colonel CONYNGHAM observed, that gentlemen formed their opinions from this town and its neighbourhood.

That no wonder the supplications of 3,000,000 people had no effect on certain gentlemen of crooked policy, who sit in this House only to withdraw all connection between this country and England.

That he thought however the Roman Catholics were daily increasing in their demands—Their claims in the course of last year extended no farther than the elective franchise and trial by jury.

Mr. CHAMBERLAINE objected to the granting any share in the legislature to any but under due qualification. The law had wisely provided a qualification, to which he saw nothing in the Catholic religion that could be a prohibition.

The test instituted at the Revolution was a political test: but that of Ireland in particular was a religious one, since an Irish Catholic may hold all the articles of the church of Rome, and yet abjure all the articles of the Revolution.

The religion of the Catholic attaches him to the monarchical part of the constitution; and in that sense is in itself a parliamentary reform.

He considered the elective franchise the restoration of a right; he would therefore insist upon it—but would at the same time insist, that the participation ought to be gradual, not a full one altogether.

Major DOYLE said, that as he was the first person in that House who declared his determination to give entire and total emancipation to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, he felt himself called upon to say a very few words in answer to some arguments which had been urged against the measure.

He disclaimed its belonging to party; it was of too great a magnitude, and he should hold that man the most infamous in society, who could sport with the feeling of three millions for so unworthy a purpose.

He denied it could affect the interest of the Protestant religion, which he respected. But he thought the idea of ascendancy, as applicable to religion, not only weak, but nearly impious. What had religion to do with it?

The Holy Author of our religion preached against ascendancy; he preached humility, and you do not find in the bible, from Genesis to Revelations, one word of commissioners of the revenue or excise, or tasters of wines, &c.

It is a question of power, not between the king and his people, for their interest is, and I hope always will be the same; but between four-fifths of the people of Ireland on the one part, and a few interested individuals on the other, who, like all monopolists, wish to exclude others from a share.

It is so with the monopolists of the India trade in England; it is so with those of the African trade in England; and it is so with the monopolists of the Irish slave trade.

I shall pass over the speech of the learned member [Doctor Duignan] as it applied to every thing but the petition which had been actually before the House. The only assertion relative to it seemed to be, that such laws as they complained of might be on the books, but were not put in force. Sir, said he, if they are too bad to be enforced, they are too bad to be there, and I never will consent to entrust the liberty of my fellow-subjects to the caprice, or even the good-nature, of the magistrate. Away with the dismal code! compared with it, the Draconian code was mercy. The sword of Damocles, hung with a single hair over my head, is a greater punishment than though it fell and crushed me.

It is said, if Catholics get the franchise, they will speedily acquire landed property. Why, Sir, they must first obtain freeholds, for the bill only gives them eligibility; then they will vote for their landlord, if he be a good one, as the Dissenters do indiscriminately, without regard to religion.

But how are the Catholics to get the landed property? It is one hundred to one against them in landed property—and will both parties magically change their qualities on the passing of the bill? The Protestant to become idle and dissipated, and the Catholic industrious and frugal, so as by industry, to purchase all the landed property. Why, Sir, if they should ever be superior in numbers and also in landed property, you could not, nor ought not, prevent their having a pre-eminence in the state. Look, Sir, said he, to Canada—see there a constitution framed by his present Majesty, asserted by his present minister. Their house of assembly (is answerable to our House of Commons) consists of fifty members, of which thirty-five are Catholics and fifteen Protestants. The business of government and the country goes on well. The thirty-five are there, not in consequence of their Catholicity, but because they have the landed property, which must and ought always to prevail. I mention this to shew that when power is out of the question, religion will be very quiet.

To this may be objected the capitulation of Montreal, to which I oppose the capitulation of Limerick. Let the one answer the other; but I care not for capitulations—their claim for freedom rests on a better basis—they derive it from God and from Nature.

It is said, they will obtain the high offices of the state—but gentlemen forget it is the king who who gives them away, and of course will not chuse the seditious.

It is said the poorer sort do not wish the franchise; I know not how people can learn their opinion. They probably are ignorant of the meaning of the term, but if they knew, that by having it, they will be protected from being turned out of their farms, to make room for freeholders, they will then thank you for the franchise. But it is said that this seldom happens. Sir, we have all often seen advertisements for lands to be let, “and none but a Protestant need apply.” I have one in my hand, said he, within the last fortnight to the same effect. It is asked will the Catholic be satisfied with this bill? Sir, it would be presumption to answer for any body of men. But, I have no doubt they will be grateful to their sovereign and the legislature, for what they do get; of course they would be still better pleased to get more. But, if they were loyal before with their former oppression, surely they will not be less so when they are materially relieved. It would be absurd to suppose they would never look further. “The higher you ascend to the hill, the more extended will be the view.” Let us give then speedily “*qui dat cele dat bis.*” Away with the left-handed wisdom of governing by divisions! Govern a whole people!—Let us give generously, and have “no craving void left aching in the breast.”

Mr. GRAYDON spoke but few words, intended as a caution to guard against the danger of extending privileges of any body of men without the greatest reserve.

Mr. GRATTAN, I could wish the bill under your consideration had gone farther. I could wish that it had given the Roman Catholics the privileges of other Dissenters. I am sure that is the only sound policy. I think, however, the bill deserves thanks, because it contains much, and also because it leads to much more; but I must say the mover had discovered more sense if he had given to the Catholics the whole now, and had settled with them for ever.

The situation of the Roman Catholics is reducible to four propositions; they are three-fourths of your people, paying their proportion of near 2,000,000*l.* of taxes, without any share in the representation or expenditure; they pay your church establishments, without any retributions; they discharge the active and laborious offices of life, manufacture, husbandry and commerce, without those franchises which are annexed to the fruits of industry; and they replenish your armies and navies, without commission, rank, or reward: under these circumstances, and under the further recommendation of total and entire political separation from any foreign prince or pretender, they desire to be admitted to the franchise of the constitution: I have listened to your objections with great respect—give me leave to answer them.

The first objection I heard, is the petition of the Catholics to his Majesty; but, who is there that does not see the question to be, whether the Catholics are aggrieved, and not how those grievances have been stated by their committee. But even, on the ground of the petition, if as in a case of bill and answer, you choose to wrangle, you will find their petition is substantially true; it complains that the Catholic, by law, cannot carry arms—the law is so; it complains that the Catholics, on refusing to discover their arms, are liable to be whipped. That law is yet in force, and finally it states, the great and radical grievance, that the Catholics are excluded from the franchises of the constitution; and about that complaint, there is no doubt, the petition therefore, cannot justify a refusal to administer redress, even if their redress depended on the manner of forming their petition. But the second objection goes on broader and bolder grounds, and insists, on the demerits of the Catholics; it states, that the Catholics abhor all Protestants, and never were, nor are, nor ever will be, loyal subjects to a Protestant king; and it asserts in particular, that in every war and in two rebellions, since the Revolution, the Catholics have exerted themselves to the best of their power, against their king and country, and have, besides, been guilty of various domestic insurrections. The last part of the objection

scarcely deserves notice ; it proposes that the Catholic inhabitants of thirty-two counties should be punished for the disturbances of six ; it proposes that the offences of a local mob should be visited on the community at large, and that the finite offences of that local mob should be punished by the eternal disfranchisement of the community ; it makes the crimes of the man, the pretext for the prosecution of the sect ; it proceeds on a principle that would disfranchise every part of his Majesty's dominions, where riots have existed, and almost every great city, the city of London in particular ; it proceeds on a principle which argues from the particular to the universal, and which in logic is false reasoning, and in politics is a departure from the principles, not of reason only, but of justice, of humanity, and of charity.

This last part of the objection, I say, scarcely requires an answer ; the first does—It states, that after the articles of Limerick, the Catholic troops rejected General Ginkle's offer, and almost to a man went to the enemy. This is not history ; the fact is otherwise ; it has been made to appear already by my honourable friend from undoubted authority, that nineteen regiments of the Catholic army at that time joined King William. The objection proceeds to another misrepresentation, and states that the Irish brigade is constantly recruited and officered from Ireland. The fact is not so. Here again the objection, in matter of fact, totally and notoriously fails. The Irish brigade is not constantly recruited and officered from Ireland, but on the contrary, few of its officers, and very few of its men, are recruited from Ireland. Gentlemen will distinguish between officers of Irish families and of Irish birth, and they will distinguish also between a regiment bearing an Irish name, and a regiment filled with Irishmen. The first is the case of the Irish brigade, and the latter is not ; and for the refutation of this part of the objection, I appeal to the knowledge and the candour of gentlemen who have seen service, and who must know the charge, that the Irish brigade is constantly officered and recruited from Ireland, to be absolutely destitute of foundation. The objection proceeds and states that 16,000 Irish Catholics fought against Great Britain in the American war. I believe the number of those Irish to be greatly magnified ; and sure I am that this description is not just ; those Irish were in great numbers—Presbyterians of the North, not Catholics of the South ; they emigrated in great bodies, and they continue now to emigrate to America from the North of Ireland, not for rebellion, but for land, or a better condition. Your fellow subjects have emigrated from poverty at home, and sometimes have met war ; and if you wish never to meet them in arms in other countries, your method should be to give them a better condition at home. The objection proceeds, and states, that great bodies of Irish fought against England at St. Eustatia and St. Lucia ; here again the objection fails in point of fact ; great bo-

dies of Irishmen did not fight against England at St. Eustatia and St. Lucia. There was indeed, a regiment of 1800, commanded by General Dillon, the Irish brigade, and this, I suppose, the objector conceives to be those great bodies of Irishmen; but that regiment was chiefly composed of Dutch, and of the recruits of various nations, and of very few Irish; and here again I appeal to the gentlemen on the service, whether this part of the objection is not, like the other parts, entirely unfounded. The objection proceeds and states, that the Irish Catholics supply the fleets and armies of the enemies in a much greater proportion than those of Great Britain; this I must positively deny; they supply the fleets and armies of the enemy in a very trifling proportion, and they supply the fleets and armies of Great Britain in a very great and abundant proportion. In the last war, of 80,000 seamen, 50,000 were Irish names; in Chelsea, near one-third of the pensioners were Irish names; in some of the men of war almost the whole complement of men were Irish. With respect to the recruiting service, it is a fact known to the gentlemen of the army, that since they have recruited for the foot in Ireland, the regiments have been filled in a great proportion with Irish Catholics. I do not mean to say, that the Irish Catholics have supplied his Majesty's fleets and armies abundantly; but so abundantly, and in so great a proportion, that the recruiting service could not well go on without them. I appeal again to gentlemen who have seen service, to their knowledge in this particular, and their candour; and I affirm that this part of the objection, like the other parts, has no foundation whatsoever. The objection proceeds and states, that some of the Protestants are nearly as criminal as the Papists; these Protestants are the persons who took a part for the emancipation of Ireland, and the objection complains that some of their measures were passed into laws; those measures were the emancipation of the country in 1782, and those ill-affected men were the Parliament, that is, the King, Lords, and Commons, that passed those acts of emancipation; the objection compares the persons concerned therein to the Catholic rebels before the Revolution; and at the same time it represents the Catholics since the Revolution, as well as before, as disaffected: here is the division under which this objection describes his Majesty's subjects; all the Catholics disloyal, and all the Protestants, who lately took part for the emancipation of Ireland, viz. the King, Lords, and Commons, disloyal likewise, more disloyal than the Catholics since the Revolution, and very like those Catholics who before the Revolution were executed for rebellion. Thus the objection ends in general defamation, and feeble insinuation—a proof how bigotry will extinguish the force of the mind, impair its principles, banish the virtues of the citizen, and the charity of the Christian.

The next objection is, that the Roman Catholics now have every thing short of political power, to which I must observe, that the objection proves two things, an ignorance of the nature of liberty, and the situation of the Catholic; civil and political liberty, depend on political power, that community that has no share whatsoever, directly, or indirectly, in political power, has no security for its political or civil liberty; the example of the Catholic is a proof; what deprives the Roman Catholic of his civil rights for this century, but the want of political rights, the want of right of representation; what deprived him of the rights of education, of self-defence; a parliament, in which he had no effectual, though for a time, he had a nominal representation. Such a parliament may take away his wife, it did so—such a parliament may bastardise his issue, it did so—such a parliament may enter into his domestic œconomy, and set on his children to defy the father, it did so; where then is the utility of attempting to convince the Catholic that he may have in security civil liberty, without any share of political powers, when his present situation is an experimental refutation of that fallacious sophistry, and a proof that no community can long enjoy civil liberty under laws that have excluded them from all share of political power; or, in other words, that no community have a security for civil liberty when that liberty may be taken away, by any body where they have no authority; but it is supposed, the Catholics have civil liberty, certainly they have not; they have not free and unfettered, the rights of education; they have not the full benefit of trial by jury, for they are excluded from petty juries, in some cases, and from grand juries in almost all; and they have not the rights of self-defence, for they cannot carry arms; no man means to say that a license to an individual at the arbitrary will of a privy council, to carry arms, is a substitute for a right of self-defence; under the law, he is ever liable to be questioned on suspicion of having arms, and subject to an inquisition instituted against the principles of self-defence; he is liable to be whipped if he refuses to make discovery, for the law has not expired, and though his discovery is no evidence against him, yet his refusal is whipping; it is therefore trifling to say, that a person so circumstanced has even civil liberty, still less any security for its continuation; but it is said, he is on the same ground, as the enfranchised Protestant, denied, utterly denied.

Protestants having property, or the symbol of property, can very generally vote—franchise, that is freedom—of guilds or corporate towns is the symbol of property; but the Protestant who has no property, cannot complain that he has no vote—he is a non-proprietor, and of course is not affected by laws taking or regulating property; he is a passenger on your farm, or a guest in your house, and has no pretensions to the regulations thereof; but the Catholic who is a proprietor may complain, because his

property is taxed and regulated without his consent. Mr. Byrne complains, he pays to the revenue near 100,000*l.* annually, and has no vote. John Doe has no vote, but he pays nothing; there is no resemblance, therefore, between the enfranchised Protestant and disfranchised Catholic; or, if any, the resemblance is that between a man who is robbed, and a man who has nothing to be robbed of—the man, the profits of whose industry are taken without his consent, and the man who has no industry from whence profits could arise—the difference between a violation of the rights of nature, and none.

The Catholic proprietor appears indeed to be on a level with the Protestant beggar, but is not. The Protestant beggar is one of the community of the legislation, though not a sharer therein; he is of that tribe for whose benefit the laws are made. In this country there are two codes of laws; one for the Protestant sect, another for the Catholic. The legislature has a common interest with the one, and against the other. The Protestant beggar has therefore an advantage over the Catholic proprietor.

It is objected they are not fit for freedom. The elective franchise acts directly on men, not measures. Montesquieu, I need not remind you, observes, that the people are good judges of character, though not always of things. Do you think the Roman Catholics adequate to that? Is there a man in the House who has a name, of whose character they are not fully apprised, who has supported, who has opposed, certain measures? The press has made every character a public subject; our conversations are known, our principles of action are very well known. As to the measures, can we suppose the Roman Catholics incapable of judging of them? They are not complicated; the measures of Ireland are domestic regulations.

The fact of their unsuitness is not true; but if it were, if they are not rational enough to choose a man to serve in Parliament, how criminal must you have been who have governed them, and under whose government, for a century, they have not acquired the power to exercise their rational faculties. Your government (supposing the charges to be true, which I utterly deny) must have been more horrible than the worst of tyrannies; it must have done worse than take away property, life, or limb; it must have brutalised your own species. But the truth is otherwise; they are not beasts; you are not tyrants. I can collect from the charge some meaning, though I cannot collect your conclusion; I collect that the Catholics have lived apart from you, and therefore you are inclined to think them an inferior species; and perhaps, though they do not labour under a moral incapacity, yet from the separation of societies they have not all your advantages. What then is the evil? The separation. What the cause? The laws. What is the remedy? The repeal of the laws.

*The objections at last take the turn of self-defence, and urge, that if you give the elective franchise, you give away the power. No, you gain it; for at present you have it not—the event will be the reverse of your apprehension. The Protestant would not give away the elective franchise, he would get it. The Protestant individual is now a monopolist against a Protestant people. The oligarchy, with the crown, has the borough—the aristocracy has a great portion of the counties. This they call a Protestant ascendancy, but this is a monopoly against a Protestant people. Some of the Protestants have understood it rightly; they have seen what the essence of the elective franchise is in its extent; that confined, it is the trade of the individual; in order to take it back from the individual and restore it to the Protestant people, it is necessary to multiply the electors, for even men in numbers cannot become property; the borough may; the borough patrons, of whatever religion, will be an aristocracy—the electors, of whatever religion, will be a people. On elections there are three parties—the minister, the aristocracy, and the people. You have thrown out of the scale of the latter a great portion of your own weight, and therefore you are light; restore that portion to the scale of the people, and you will recover that gravity: the effect therefore of this participation will be to restore to the Protestant people their elective authority. As an example of your weakness, the whole power of the elective franchise has not created, in the Protestant body, a Protestant ascendancy; far from it the Protestant electors have not been able to carry a single point for these last ten years, nor any point for these last twenty years, except in 1779 and 1782, when there was either strength to assist your cause, and with it the cordial and active support of the Catholic community; as the church of England's electors have acquired strength by communicating the franchise to the Presbyterians, so Protestants and Presbyterians acquire force by communicating the franchise to the Catholics—and, on the same principle on which the Protestant electors exclude the Catholics, so should that part of them which is called the church of England exclude the Presbyterians; the Parliament and its electors would then preserve what they now depart from—unity of religion, and destroy unity of interest. In a few words, this objection says, that in order to preserve the power of a Protestant people, we should take precaution, that we may be no people at all. This objection is entirely blind to the present progress of things, and does not see that the tendency of it is not to deism most undoubtedly, it is to popery. This objection gives no credit to the operation of association on the repeal of the penal code; it allows nothing for the growth of liberal opinion; it does not conceive the possibility of a political conformity; it cannot conceive one political attachment in a society, whose members, as is the case of every society, entertain their different no-

tions on subjects of religion. The objection on the whole, is founded on this position, that two sects will retain the animosity of the provocation after the provocation is removed. The objection goes farther; it says, that if the Catholics get the franchise, they will, at length, get such power in the House of Commons, as to repeal the act of settlement, reverse the outlawries, and subvert the Protestant church. With regard to the first, there would be a difficulty, somewhat approaching to an impossibility, for if those outlawries were set aside, and the act repealed, the estates would remain exactly where they are. The title being now, by time, another operation would be necessary; the Parliament should attain every present proprietor; but that would not do; a further operation is necessary: the Parliament should find out the lawful heir of the old proprietors, which, I apprehend, would be impossible; but, exclusive of the impossibility of the event, I will endeavour to give the imaginary fears of gentlemen other reasons: Before the Catholics could have power to repeal the act of settlement and reverse the outlawries, they must be the Parliament, and before they become the Parliament they must be the landed proprietors of the kingdom; in that event, it is impossible to say what they will do; but it is obvious to say what they will not do; they will not change the state of landed property. In further answer it is almost unnecessary to repeat that there are no Catholics now making claim; that the Catholics have solemnly renounced it; that they desire you to propound your own terms of renunciation; that the number who could trace a claim is next to nothing; and that the number of Catholics interested in the present state of landed property, by mortgage, purchase, and otherwise, is the majority of the principal members of their community; but though it is unnecessary to urge this now, yet there is another thing which cannot be too strongly impressed on you, that is the present state of Catholic depression.

Protestant property is very much in danger. Witness the funds, whose fall is a proof how much you are one interest, and what a portion of that interest is the Catholics. Do you tremble at a visionary claim; and are you insensible and stupid to an existing diminution of your property, real or personal. The second objection is, that the church establishment will be subverted. I see no reason why the church should be more in danger from the Catholics than from the Presbyterians, who, in Ireland, are the majority of the Protestants. If the church is in danger, it is from the times, not from the Catholics; and I know of nothing so likely to increase that danger as an opposition on the part of the church to the liberty of three parts of the island. To insist on a system of taxation, without representation, in order to secure a system of tithe, without consolation, would be to hazard both; but to shake the latter in a time of some specula-

tion on the subject of church emoluments, the best policy is to make those emoluments reconcilable to other interests and passions.

I have considered the objections to Catholic freedom. I will now consider the code of Catholic depression. I will begin with the beginning, and where you should have begun; with education. Respecting this part of the subject, your present laws are criminal on three grounds; they refuse a degree to the Catholic in the university, and establishing a separation at the time in which friendships and sympathies are formed, ordain a species of anti-fraternity by act of parliament, excluding him from the right of education in your university, they exclude him from the right of endowing an university for educating himself—that is, they impose ignorance by act of parliament, unless where they ensure a third mischief, foreign education; from this original error the law advances to more.

They have permitted intermarriage as politic; but they have made it subject to the highest penalty (not only as impolitic, but as criminal) that association, which is the parent of every other, and leads directly to mass and mingle into one people; they have punished and deterred by disqualification. Thus they have ordained separation on propagation, and have gone to the origin of things, to sow the seed of mischief there. They have attempted to make two molds for the human species, transmitting to posterity opposite characteristics of implacable weakness, and inveterate and malignant folly. They have introduced into the religion of the Christians the tyranny which disgraces the Gentoos, and which they also call religion; they have cut and carved the human species into distinct casts of perpetual incommunication, stopping the circulation of the human blood, in order to preserve his pride, his folly, and his imbecility. Did you find that nature suggested a hint to your laws, by stopping the pregnant consequences of such intermarriages, or by muling the issue of the first degree? I would allow that the consent of the mother and father, in one precise organization of faith, was essential to human propagation. But here the honesty of nature derides the madness of the statute, and the wisdom of your instinct corrects the folly of your law. You have made a separation between the sects in an instance, when an intercourse was rendered necessary, not only by your real interest, but your idle fears; because that marriage which you deterred, confounds those claims which you effect to tremble at, and blends Catholics pretensions with Protestant titles, while it makes Catholic numbers administer to Protestant population, and physically and politically would, if your state of mind admitted of benefit, do you service. Your late act seemed sensible of this, and therefore permitted the marriage, but permitted it under the penalty of disqualification; that is, the law authorises the act, and punishes it. The law has a glimmering

sense of its own folly, goes a little way, just as in cases where the mind has a sense of what is wrong, without a love of what is right. Your law establishes the principle of intermarriages, and then impeaches its own principle; it at once authorized and discredited; and to complete the folly of the act, the punishment you inflict, is to fall exclusively on those of your own persuasion. The Roman Catholic husband is not punished for the intermarriage with a Protestant, but the Protestant husband is disqualified for the intermarriage with a Papist. If a Protestant adds Catholic claim and Catholic property to the Protestant community, he loses the rank of a citizen and the community of which he is a member, loses also a portion of its constitutional strength; and the number of Protestant electors, of whose paucity you complain, is rendered still less, by doing an act which you affect to encourage. Thus, in every step of the progress, you yourselves are punished; you are punished as individuals, by disqualification, and as a free community, by diminution. In order to palliate your own disfranchisement to your own people, you are obliged to depreciate the value of franchise; in order to reconcile your permission to your penalty, and your penalty to your permission, you are obliged to aggravate the condition of intermarriage which you permit, and to depreciate the condition of freedom, which you affect to hold inestimable. Such unhappy effects are the result of an unascertained and ill-assured mind in the legislature that devises the law. Struggling with reason, and compromising with folly, it makes the law a monster—a permission with prohibition. Your law says—remove this inhuman and impolitic separation; unite, intermarry; the law adds, if you do, I will drive you out of the peal of the constitution. The motive to all these inconsistencies is as inconsistent and weak as the inconsistencies themselves.

We lay it down as a maxim of government, that the theology of the wife as well as the husband, is a subject of penal law, moral depravity is out of the question: her theology is what the state investigates, and yet she may be a pagan as well as a profligate, but she must not be a Christian of the Catholic communion; she may worship Jove, or Venus, or Mahomet—but Christ! if she worships him according to the Catholic ritual, by that she is supposed to entertain principles hostile to the state, and to poison—what?—the purity of her husband's politics in matters of elections, and lest he should vote for an improper Protestant, we strive, by the law, to make him a Papist—for we take away from him one great motive for continuing a Protestant—the right of citizenship. We send him from the society of the franchised Protestant, and of course, force him into that of the Papist. Conceived in the same spirit of selfish folly is that part of the code, which affects to regulate the medical art, by rules of persecution, and so regulates that art, as to refuse any degree of pro-

fefforship therein to three-fourths of the community. This is a combination against the sick, Protestant as well as Papist. How would you have exclaimed, if any one had combined against your luxury, as you yourselves have combined against your health, and had said, that no man should have a license to exercise the art of a cook, unless a Protestant? Suppose you had said, no Englishman shall have a license, no Scotchman shall have a license, there are some who would not live to refuse unto their own countrymen the same privilege. If a man's life is attacked by a robber, the law has not said, let no man save him but a Protestant; but the law does say, if a man's life be attacked by disease, we authorise no man to save him but a Protestant; that is, we refuse to three-fourths of our countrymen a license to administer to the health of one another; now, the chance of medical ability, is according (in the same place) to the number of persons who may furnish practitioners; by your restriction, that chance you decrease, and, in the same proportion, encrease the chances of mortality—and this depredation on your healths, you commit on yourselves, in the name of religion; you diminish the foundations of your liberty, and you attack the sources of your existence, the better to promote your power and ascendancy.

I know I shall be told, that they practise in Ireland: there are instances, I allow, but it is under a license got in other countries; you have not prevented the practice under these restrictions, because that was too strong for your humanity; not given the license, because that was too strong for your prejudices; you, of course, have annexed to Catholic practitioners a clause of foreign education; you certainly do tolerate their practice, but under circumstances that amount to an entire discouragement, if not intoleration:—no license to practice; of the five, no one professorship; of all the places in hospitals, so necessary for experimental knowledge, not one; these chairs are made so many jobs for Protestant practitioners.

If Doctor Purcel saves the lives of his Majesty's Protestant subjects, it is not our fault, we have given such sort of men no sort of encouragement in such practices; we allowed him no professorship, gave no license, no countenance; let him and his patients pay their vows to some other country. I have already dwelt upon the importance of the military profession. I have shewed how constantly you connived at the breach of your own law; the question is not, whether the Catholic shall serve in the army, but shall serve in the army only when you want him, and he gets nothing by it; as a common soldier, getting sixpence per day, it seems he is safe—as an officer, getting a livelihood, dangerous; that you should monopolize his blood, and your own honours and emoluments, it is a condition too unequal to be lasting; they are fit to be entrusted with arms, we say, therefore, they

may be soldiers; they are not fit to be entrusted with arms, we say, therefore they may not be officers; but the better order of Catholics we rely on, it is the lower order we suspect; therefore, the better may not, and the lower order may be received in our army. The extending this disqualification even to a prohibition, on their carrying arms, is another severity. Is it to say, we are afraid we have injured you too much, to suffer you to carry arms even for your own defence? It is a prohibition of conscious severity, useless, because constantly broken, and meritoriously departed from by yourselves, who arm Catholic servants against your own laws; as you arm Catholic soldiers against your enemies, and against your law—which in this instance is your greatest enemy. A Protestant gentleman wants to go home late in the evening, that is a good reason for arming a Catholic against law; a Catholic farmer wants to preserve his life and property, that is no reason for arming him according to law; you use, in this particular, the laws as your sport, and the Papists as your property; they may arm as your servants and as your mercenaries, but not as citizens; thus, by our connivance as individuals, and severity as legislators, they are encouraged to despise the laws, and to hate them. I have shewn already, that this law, prohibitory on carrying arms, is not observed, and cannot be observed; what more can the state take away than the robber? unless the penalty is made something more, than the loss of property and life, men will carry arms to defend both.

That part of your code which disables the Roman Catholic from sitting on grand juries, except, and so forth, is like every other part, liable to great objections; it subjects three millions to be taxed, without their consent, by the grand jury, who are already taxed, without their consent, by the parliament, and is a second flagrant breach of the great charter; to the Catholic, that charter is a grievance; it is light to a blind man. You tax three millions, not only for the state, but for every road presentment, robbery petition, illicit still, the abuse and extravagance of which grants, is to you a complaint, the use, as well as the abuse, is to him a grievance. This is a great aggravation of public taxes; it is a home-felt tyrant, that brings to his door the little vexations and fretful tyranny of a superior, and makes him insignificant in his own farms, and under his own vine, and touches him in those lesser nerves where he is less mortal, but extremely irritable; and here you subject him, to where the partial distributions of justice in a tribunal, tax him without his consent, and try him without his peers, where he has no peers, and his adversary may have votes; and as the oppression is great, so is the motive little; it is a monopoly of jobbing; you do not exclude him entirely from the petty jury, which is a function much more interesting to Protestant life and property, but which is trouble without county patronage or county power. As the

object is monopoly, so, as usual, the pretext is religion; that exclusion which you impose in the case of juries, you impose in the case of magistracy; and though with less oppression, with as little pretence, three millions of your fellow subjects are to have no share whatsoever in the execution of the law, no more than they have in the formation of it. Over the whole extent of your country, and of four millions of people, you exclude three millions from the function of enforcing obedience to the law, as you have taken care that liberty, so have you taken care that law shall have no very general extension in your island. You have here, as usual, punished the Protestant, the better to disable the influence of the Papist; and no Protestant married to a Papist can be a justice of peace. I have heard your reasons, that a Catholic should not be a magistrate in Ireland, because the law contains a code which is against him; that is, the law his enemy; and yet we talk of the lawlessness of the common people, just as we talk of the blessings of our most excellent constitution, excluding them from any share in the law, or any participation in the constitution; what makes the subject love the law, not the hangman? pains and penalties may be the objects of terror, but not of affection; he loves the law, because he has a share in the formation and execution of it; the men who are reconciled to taxes, are those who vote; the men who are reconciled to penalties, are those who enact them; and the men who are friends to a rigid execution of the law, is the community that furnishes juries to find bills; judges to sentence, and magistrates to execute. The relation in which the Protestant stands, makes him a party to the law; the relation in which the Catholic stands, make him objects of the law, not party; he is not a party to the law, and the law is a party against him, therefore, the laws may be objects of his obedience, not his affection. This then is their situation, and this situation explains the liberality of those who say, they offer them every thing except the privilege of becoming part of the state; every thing, except a part of the electoral community; every thing, except a part of the legislative community; every thing, except a part of the judicial community; every thing, except a part of the corporative community; every thing, except a part of the executive community—that is a species of excommunity, with privileges to acquire property for you to tax without their consent. Thus are the Catholics, by the present code, excluded from an interest in your laws; they are also excluded from communication with your persons; the society of marriage punished; the society of education forbidden; the society of civil employment forbidden; the society of military employment forbidden; the society of parliament forbidden; the society of election forbidden; the society of grand jury forbidden; the society of magistracy forbidden; there is no subject of public care, in

which they can associate with the Protestant without breach of law, no subject of conversation, except foreign politics, foreign changes, and foreign revolutions.

We have declared, we hope to become one people, how by these lines of circumvallation, erasing the natural geography of your country, and setting up parallels and circles of folly and superstition, from the marriage bed to the cradle, from the cradle to college, and from college to the grave, are two nations, that cannot by any public interest or business, or by any general call, save that of death, be brought together. There have been three policies observed with respect to the Catholics; the first was, that of Cromwell—extermination by operation of the sword; the second was, that of Anne—extermination by operation of the laws; and the third was your's, which allowed them a qualified existence. Though the two former were cruel, yet both were consistent—They both considered Papists as criminals, and exercised over them the right of conquest—They considered the Catholics as a body who were neither to have the power, nor property, nor any public existence in your country. The laws of Ireland prevented them from acquiring property in land, and the usurpations of England prevented either them or the Protestants from acquiring any considerable property by commerce. But the third policy, much milder than either, is more extravagant than both—your policy. You allow them schools, seminaries, and colleges, but distinct from our own, and without funds; marriage, but marriage attended with pains and penalties; a free trade without franchise, and land without a vote. Let us discuss how far this policy is consistent with the interest of the constitution, the king, or the British empire. I will suppose, under your laws the Catholics purchase considerable tracts of land—The lands so purchased is unrepresented. Just as the wealth of your country grows, the extent of your constitution contracts. I will suppose these men become a great commercial body; a great portion of commercial interest, as well as the landed, is unrepresented, and your constitution still more contracted: what a portion of the strength of the country, must, in that event, be taxed, without the consent of its owners. Your constitution will be no longer a representation, either of property or population, so that the British constitution will be worked out of the island by operation of law. Who will answer for the patience of that strength, compounded of a great portion of wealth, as well as of numbers?—Who will answer for the satisfaction of those proprietors? It is no life, but the condition of living; the slave is not so likely to complain of the want of property, as the proprietor of the want of privilege. The human mind is progressive; the child does not look back to the parent that gave him being, nor the legislator to the people that gave him the power of acquisition, but both

look forward ; the one to provide for the comforts of life, and the other to obtain all the privileges of property.

Your imperfect grants, and comprehensive theories, have given those aspiring thoughts, and let in that train of ideas which may hereafter greatly serve, or marvelously distract your country—you have already given to their minds the first principles of motion, and the laws of motion now must direct the machine.

The germ on the soul, like the child in the womb, or the seed in the earth, swell in their stated time to their destined proportions, by virtue of their laws, which we neither make nor controul. Talk not in such cases of gratitude, rely on that gratitude which is founded on interest ; such gratitude as governed yourselves from 1691, when you secured your property, to 1779, when you demanded your trade, and 1782, when you demanded your liberty, from a colony looking only to property, to a people looking to a free form of government—from planters joining with the mother country against the Catholics, to a nation joining with the Catholics, to exact of the mother country trade and freedom. Do I condemn you, such is the progress of nation, such the nature of man, and such his gratitude. Let me now consider how far this policy is consistent with the interest of his Majesty ; it has been said, that under a Protestant monarch, the Catholic ought never to have the elective franchise ; thus gentlemen have attempted to annex the curse of Catholic slavery to the person of the King. They have gone a step farther, and have supposed the coronation oath goes against the present claims of the Catholics, and have thus represented the King as sworn against the liberties of his people ; they have done this, on a surmise, the statement of which would excite our scorn, if its consequence did not produce our apprehensions, that men believing in the Real Presence, cannot be well affected to the house of Hanover ; they have urged this, when the Pretender was extinct, when the power of the Pope was extinct, and when the sting of Catholic faith was drawn ; they have done this, when a new enthusiasm had gone forth in the place of religion, much more adverse to Kings than Popery, and infinitely more prevailing—the spirit of republicanism. At such a time, they have chosen to make the Catholics outcasts of a Protestant monarchy, and leave them no option but a republic ; such a policy, and such argument, tend to make Irish Catholics French republicans ; they aid the cause of proselytism, against the cause of kings : they would drive the Roman Catholics from the hustings, where they might vote without danger, and would send them to plant the tree of liberty on their own hills, where treason, foreign and domestic, may intrigue in a body, kept vacant for all the floating poison of the times to catch and propagate—a school for the discontents of both countries, and the foreign emissaries, who need not bring any

other manifesto than your own code, and your own resolutions.

I differ much from those who say, that the Roman Catholic cannot, under a Protestant king, enjoy the franchises of the constitution; I should say directly the reverse—that under no government can the franchises of the constitution be communicated so effectually, and secured so permanently to all his Majesty's subjects, as under our present monarchical government. The time is come, when every loyal subject should be free, and every free subject loyal;—it is true, the Roman Catholics will now be your fellow subjects, but not your subjects; they will be subjects of the king, and not the slaves of subjects, who stood with regard to them in the place of kings. Do you lament the change? I congratulate you upon it; the bashaw will not command the cringe of the peasant's knee, but the king will command the strength of it. You appropriate this great body of men to the throne; you put the stamp of the king upon them, and serve the crown more by far than when you vote for his minister. Let me consider this policy in its relation to the British empire. Britain, you know, governs you no longer; it is not your religious arrangement that interests her, but your physical strength. You do not mean to say, that the Catholics cannot be faithful in their connection with Great Britain. I appeal to those officers who served with them in the last war; their religion surely cannot now make them adverse; the Roman Catholic religion resembles much more the church of England, than the church of France; their dissent cannot make them adverse. You say the Catholics are not as well disposed as the Protestants, because they are not descended from the English; many of them are; but nations have neither a parent's nor a child's affection; like the eagle, they dismiss their young and know them no longer. I know not whether the Roman Catholics are as well disposed to Great Britain as the Protestants are; but I am sure they are at least as well disposed as the Protestants would be, if they were deprived of civil and political advantages. If you doubt their disposition, do you dispose them better. You are trustees to preserve to Great Britain the physical force of the Catholics of Ireland, and nothing but you can forfeit it; not religion, not the Pope, not the Pretender, but your proscription, which argues, that the franchise of the Catholic is incompatible with British connection, and of course teaches the Catholic to argue, that the British connection is incompatible with Catholic liberty. Thus you would deprive Great Britain of her resources, in recruiting army and navy, but you will supply their place; how? One million, after filling all the places in church and state, will spare the overplus of their numbers. You will borrow from the loom, and send the weaver of the North into the ranks. But this is a partial statement for you, instead of affording one million to Great Britain, you must borrow men

from Great Britain to defend and garrison yourselves. Calculate then, that in persisting to disfranchise the Catholic, you make him adverse; three millions are to be put into the other scale, which would be a difference of six millions, that is nearly one half of the whole empire. It follows from this, that your policy is prejudicial to the British empire, as well as to the throne.

I have considered your situation and your arguments. A situation of extraordinary peril. Arguments of extraordinary weakness, of monopoly, of panic, of prejudice, of any thing but religion; arguments, which, like the fabric they would sustain, cannot bear the proof of any trial, nor the principles of morality, nor those of religion, nor those of policy, nor those of constitution; neither the touch of time, nor the revolutions of mankind; their tendency is to make freedom a monopoly, which is like an endeavour to make the air and the light a monopoly; their tendency is to make God a monopoly. I have heard of monopolies of salt, monopolies of rice, monopolies of corn, but here is a monopoly of the Almighty, and yet the persons who use these arguments, are men of talents. Compare, compound, abstract, but in this instance, the string of their madness so strangely perplexed in the intellectual function, one should think God had smitten the intellect of the country, as well as her fortunes, with some distinguished imbecility; suppose a will impeached for insanity, and it appeared in evidence, that the testator had, in his capacity as a general officer, taken powder and ball from one half of his battalion, because they believed in the Real Presence, or when sick, had refused to take a specific from Dr. Purcel, declaring, he had confidence in his medicine, but had no faith in his sacrament; or had disinherited his own son, because his son's wife did not understand theology, or had fell on her knees to return thanks to God for his universal blessings, and then had risen up, and dealt out imprecations on three-fourths of the people about him; or proclaimed, that as long as a Protestant prince was on the throne, three-fourths of his subjects be disfranchised.—would not the evidence, which is nothing more than a compound of your piety and your policy, if applied to the case of an individual, compel twelve honest men, on their oaths, to find a verdict of insanity?

I have read of a republic, where the whole business of life was neglected, to give place to mathematical investigation. I can suppose a more extraordinary state, where the law excluded from serving the public, three-fourths of the people, unless they would give a theological opinion touching an abstract point of divinity, and verify that opinion on oath. I have heard of Athens, that cruel republic, excluding so many of her own children from the rights of citizenship; but she only had the wisdom of Socrates, the light of Plato;—she had not, like you, revelation to instruct her; besides she had not the press—she had not the benefits of your

lesson. What lesson, that to a people it was not life, but the condition of living; and to be bound without your own consent, was to be a slave: and, therefore, you were not satisfied in 1782 with the free exercise of your religion. However, I do not rely on your private productions. What are your public tracts, your repeated addresses to the King, the Speaker's annual speech to the throne, what are they while the penal code remains, but so many dangerous and inflammatory publications, felicitating the Protestants on the blessings of that constitution from whence three-fourths are excluded; but above all, that instrument, infinitely more incendiary than all Mr. Paine has written, that instrument which you annually vote; what is it now? A challenge to discontent. I mean a money bill, wherein you dispose of the money of three millions of the people without their consent. You do not stir, nor vote, nor speak, without suggesting to the Catholics some motive, either in provocation of your blessings, or the poison of your free principles; some motive, I say, which is fatal to that state of quietism, wherein, during this age of discussion, you must enlay your people in order to give your government the chance of repose.

You are struggling with difficulties you imagine; you are mistaken; you are struggling with impossibilities. To enchain the mind—to case in the volatile essential soul—nor tower, nor dungeon, much less parliament, can be retentive of those fires, kindled by yourselves, in the breasts of your fellow subjects. I would have you, at this time, distrust that religious vanity which tells you, that these men are not fit for freedom; they have answered that vanity in a strain of oratory peculiar to the oppressed; it is the error of sects to value themselves more upon their differences, than their religion; and in these differences, in which they forget the principles of their religion, they imagine they have discovered the mystery of their salvation, and to this suppressed discovery they have offered human sacrifices; what human sacrifices have we offered? the dearest, the liberties of our fellow subjects: distrust again that fallacious policy, which tells your power is advanced by their bondage; it is not your power, but your punishment; it is liberty without energy, you know it; it presents with a monopoly, and the monopoly of others, not your own;—it presents you with the image of a monster, in a state when the heart gives no circulation, and the limbs receive no life; a nominal representative, and a nominal people;—call not this your misfortune, it is your sentence, it is your execution. Never could the law of nature suffer one set of men to take away the liberty of another, and that of a numerous part of their people, without feeling a diminution of their own strength and freedom; but, in making laws on the subject of religion, we forget mankind until their own distraction admonishes statesmen of two truths—the one, that there is a God—the other, that there is

a people; never was it permitted to any nation; they may perplex their understanding with various apologies, but never long was it permitted to exclude from essential, from what they themselves have pronounced essential blessings; a great portion of themselves for periods of time, and for no reason, or, what is worse, for such reason as you have advanced. Conquerors, or tyrants proceeding from conquerors, have scarcely ever, for any length of time, governed by those partial disabilities; but a people so to govern itself, or rather under the name of government, so to exclude one another; the industrious, the opulent, the useful, that part that feeds you with its industry, and supplies you with its taxes, weaves that you may wear, and ploughs that you may eat; to exclude a body so useful, so numerous, and that for ever—and in the mean time to tax them *ad libitum*, and occasionally to pledge their lives and fortunes! For what! For their disfranchisement. It cannot be done, continue it, and you expect from your laws what it were blasphemy to ask of your Maker. Such a policy always turns on the inventor, and bruises him under the stroke of the sceptre or the sword, or sinks him under the accumulation of debt and loss of dominion. Need I go to instances? What was the case of Ireland, enslaved for a century, and withered and blasted with her Protestant Ascendancy, like a shattered oak, seethed on its hill by the fires of its own intolerance? What lost England America, but such a policy? an attempt to bind men by a Parliament wherein they are not represented; such an attempt as some would now continue to practise on the Catholics, and involve England. What was it saved England to Ireland, but the contrary policy? I have seen their principles of liberty verified by yourselves. I have heard addresses from counties and cities here, on the subject of the slaves, to Mr. Wilberforce, thanking him for his efforts to set free a distressed people; has your pity traversed leagues of sea, to sit down by the black boy on the coast of Guinea—and have you forgot the man at home by your side, your brother? Come then, and by one great act cancel this code, and prepare your mind for that bright order of time which now seems to touch your condition. But I have tired you;—suffer me to sit down, and thank you for your patient attention.

After Mr. GRATTAN had done speaking, a few words were alternately spoken by the Doctors BROWN and DUIGENAN, and Mr. Secretary HOBART; the question was carried in the affirmative, with only one negative; and the bill committed for Monday, with three negatives.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1793.

The American trade bill was read a third time, and passed.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1793.

The bill for granting several sums of money therein mentioned, called the Pious Use Bill, was read a third time, and passed.

The resolutions of the committee appointed to take into consideration the state of the duties on hearth-money, were reported, and agreed to.

A petition of the parishioners of the parish of St. Luke, in the barony of Donore, and county of Dublin, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that several of the petitioners are industrious manufacturers, and that a greater part depend on the scanty produce of their manual labour, which for some period back hath afforded them a very precarious and inconsiderable subsistence; that within these last twenty years the parish of St. Luke hath declined considerably in its value, insomuch that the minister's money, which in the year 1773 amounted to 142*l.* 14*s.* 5*d.* does not produce at present more than 124*l.* by reason that several holdings and tenements from whence taxes were formerly collected are at this time either prostrate or in ruins; that for the payment of the police tax all holdings exceeding in value 5*l.* per annum stand rated at fifty per cent. more than the minister's money, which, together with the late augmentation of the workhouse money, occasioned by the police institution, subjects many of the poorest inhabitants to the payment of an increased taxation of from 12*s.* to 40*s.* each per year, although they do not at present experience so much protection as was formerly afforded them under the old watch establishment, and for which the petitioners never paid more than 4*s.* per house annually; that the petitioners do most anxiously desire protection, and are willing to expend yearly a sum equal to the amount of their minister's money for that purpose, and if authorised by law to appoint parish constables and directors from among the parishioners, they humbly conceive they would be enabled to protect themselves effectually at an expense more suitable to their circumstances than that which at present they are liable to pay; and therefore praying relief.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

The stamp-duty bill was read a third time and passed.

The House being summoned to attend the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Lords; which having been done, and returned, the Speaker reported that his Excellency had given the royal assent to

1. An act to prevent the importation of arms, gun-powder and ammunition into this kingdom, and the removing and keeping of gun-powder, arms and ammunition without license.

2. An act for indemnifying such persons as have acted for the service of the public, in advising or carrying into execution three several proclamations of the Lord Lieutenant and council of this kingdom, bearing date the 26th day of December, 1792, and the 17th day of January, 1793, respectively, and for establishing certain bonds therein mentioned.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON moved leave to bring in a bill to secure the freedom of Parliament, by ascertaining the qualification of members to serve therein. Leave given.

Sir JOHN PARNEL moved leave to bring in a bill to prevent the insurance of lottery tickets, and to regulate the drawing of lotteries. Leave given.

Mr. GRAYDON wished to make a motion before the House should go into committee on the Roman Catholic bill; the extension of franchise in that bill was the cause of the motion he would offer; his idea would be to limit the number of freeholders capable of voting at elections, to those possessing freeholds of 10*l*. yearly value. The vast influx which the present bill would occasion by the admission of Roman Catholics, was an object demanding serious concern: but his intention extended not only to them but to Protestant freeholders; at the same time that it would not affect the present freeholders, whom he wished to let drop off of themselves; by this means, not only the independence of elections would be secured, but the confusion which the vast multitudes of additional voters must occasion, would be avoided.

He therefore moved, "That the committee be empowered to receive a clause, to limit in future the value of freeholds entitling persons to vote at elections, without prejudicing the right of persons now entitled."

Mr. DENIS BROWNE was not at present prepared to give an opinion on so important a question: he thought it a much fitter clause for an election bill than the one before the House, which he thought such a clause would only serve to embarrass. As he was now up, he would say, that whatever might be said to the contrary, he thought the bill of his right honourable friend [Mr. Hobart] was a solid and substantial provision for the Roman Catholics, with which they should be, and, as he believed, were not only satisfied, but very grateful. If that right honourable gentleman had waited till the prejudices and fears of every man in the House were at an end, he might indeed have brought forward a bill to level every distinction between Catholics and Protestants; but he must have waited a very long time indeed. However, he himself could not help saying, that he had one great objection more to the form than the matter of the bill; and it was this, that

all the benefits offered by it were in the back ground, while every thing withheld from Catholics was displayed in the front: the bill opened to them all the departments of the revenue, the post-office, the ordnance, the treasury, and the magistracy of counties; upwards of two thousand offices in the state, while the whole number withheld (including sheriffs of counties) did not amount to two hundred; he was convinced therefore that they were contented. Upon the whole, he wished not to overload the measure; additional clauses would retard it here, and might hazard the loss of it in another House.

Mr. HOBART would not now deliver his opinion as to the particular measure of limiting freeholds; but as he conceived the object of the bill to be to give certain rights to Catholics, not to take any from Protestants, he must oppose the clause as tending to clog the measure, and not to answer any purpose intended by the bill.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, that there was an order of the House, that no clause foreign to the title of a bill should be referred to a committee, and he conceived that this clause came directly under that order.

Mr. STEWART (of Killamoon) said, he would resist this proposal, at whatever time it came before the House. He never would consent to disfranchise the 40s. freeholders; they had never made an ill-use of that franchise; on the contrary, they had ever been the principal support of the independence of elections.

Mr. GRATTAN requested that his honourable friend would withdraw his motion. He agreed with the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Hobart] that it would only incumber the bill.

Mr. GRAYDON withdrew his motion.

Mr. GEORGE KNOX said, he had intended, last Friday, to make a proposition to the House, which from a mistake as to order, he had been obliged then to postpone, he would now offer it; but as he had before given the House so much trouble, he held it incumbent on him to take up very little of their time; by the motion he should offer he had not the least intention to imply any censure upon the right honourable mover of the bill; on the contrary, he thought him intitled to the thanks of the country for the manner in which he had acted; but he would look into the speech from the throne, and he would endeavour to carry the royal wish into effect; he would see there a recommendation to Parliament to discover measures, which might promote union and harmony amongst his Majesty's people. Of the intentions of mi-

nisters he knew nothing, but as this had been left to the House—as that desirable object, the promotion of union and harmony, the best and most powerful support of the throne had been left to the House, he thought it their duty, as representatives of their constituents, and as subjects to the best of sovereigns, to use their best exertions for this desirable end. He would not follow the political dreamer through his wild averrations; he would not be overborne by the clamours of turbulence, nor scared by the frantic fancies of the enthusiast; he would not follow desperate and disappointed statesmen in the plunges of their despair; he would not go to the Roman Catholic, the Dissenter, or the Protestant; his guide and his object would be the constitution, and that only.

There were, he said, but three ways of governing; by fear, by respect, or by interest. In our constitution these were happily united; there was fear of the laws, respect for rank and interest in the state. Despotic governments ruled by fear alone, and their instruments were ignorance and indigence; and as far as they admitted knowledge and security of property, so far did they tend to their own destruction. France had been formerly a mixed monarchy, of the regal and aristocratic powers; the kings of France disgusted by, and disgusting the haughty barons, had changed the pride of feudal independence into the mean and supple courtiers of Versailles; the kingdom had of course been for the last reigns totally despotic; but by admission of knowledge and the security of property, the democracy had obtained so much influence, that the popular torrent, no longer to be restrained, had rushed over the country, and swept away the throne, while misrule and anarchy rode in all the sublimity of turbulence upon the waves. Such was the principle of Protestant despotism—fear; and such the instruments, ignorance and indigence. Protestants have issued edicts and Catholics have obeyed them; until lately there was no law to protect the Catholic; the Catholic had not been his fellow-subject, but his subject: he had now obtained property; this sovereignty could then no longer exist; Protestants should surrender it while it could be done with safety, otherwise they might lose it, and the constitution along with it. For his part, he most willingly resigned his share in this sovereignty; since he could no longer be the master, he would be too proud to become the servant.

Much had been said of late about civil and political liberty; the first, he believed, to consist in the enjoyment of personal security and of property; the latter in the means of enjoying that liberty; the first of these Catholics now possessed; but the very nature of that possession was in the same proportion to desire the other: the principle of the present bill went to begin to give them the latter, by giving the right of suffrage; what was the object of suffrage? To chuse a person to whom the voter is attached,

who has the same interests with him, and whose conduct and principles he admires and approves: But by giving this right without the power of representation, what was said to the Catholics? "You may vote, but you must vote for men to whom you are not attached, whose interests you have been taught to consider as detached and foreign from yours, whose conduct and whose principles you dislike and disapprove." Would this tend to union and harmony, or to satisfaction and gratitude, in Catholics? He saw in this restriction the certain success of those principles which he abhorred—the republican. The principle that that House should be the organ of the popular will, led to the principle of voting by heads, and that again unavoidably to one assembly, and the overthrow of the aristocracy, the harbingers of pure democracy. But he would have the House considered as the representatives, and not the attorneys of the people; not the organ of their will, but of their advantage; not to obey their fluctuating humours, but to stand between their interests and their caprice; yet this principle would be inculcated by the higher order of Catholics on the lower orders; if the higher order was not allowed an interest in the state, let the legislature secure their interest, and their fidelity was secured; let it act in opposition to this, and the higher Catholic would say to the lower, you were a man before you were a freeholder; as a man you are not to be bound by laws to which you did not personally assent; and thus would the wildness of democracy, urged, not restrained as it should be by the aristocracy, who feel no interest in the state, hurry on with Paine in one hand, and the sword in the other, to the destruction of the constitution. He concluded by moving, "that the committee might be empowered to receive a clause to admit Roman Catholics to sit and vote in the House of Commons."

Major DOYLE rose to second the motion; he said, that having been obliged in the course of discussing this very important question, to solicit the attention of the House, upon two different nights, very much at length; he should ill repay the kindness the House had been pleased to honour him with, were he in the present instance to trespass upon its patience; he should content himself with barely seconding the motion of the honourable member; because although it was not shaped exactly as he wished, nor went the whole length of his idea, yet it tended towards the point which he had openly stated to the House, on the first day of the session, to be his great object, namely, the total and entire emancipation of the Catholic subjects of Ireland.

Mr. BLAKE (of Ardfry) said, the intention of the honourable mover meets with my most cordial approbation, as it corresponds immediately with my object, which is to endeavour, by every pos-

fible means, to induce men to relinquish those pernicious doctrines which led them to conceive religious and political sentiments were intimately connected, if not totally inseparable; which idea I am happy to find is nearly obsolete, but which I fear will be kept alive by the restrictions contained in the bill upon your table, they still mark a want of confidence in the loyalty and integrity of men professing particular religious doctrines. It having been, however, suggested to me that it is not impossible that this bill, even as it stands at present, may meet strong opposition elsewhere, I submit to the honourable and learned mover, whether it is prudent to clog it with any thing further, or whether it would not be more advisable to permit it to pass in its present state, which will not preclude the honourable gentleman from bringing in a distinct bill for the accomplishment of his object. I merely suggest this idea to the honourable mover's consideration; if, however, he is determined to persevere in his motion, (as I am determined to do every thing that tends to the final emancipation of the Roman Catholics) he shall have my support on the occasion.

Mr. MICHAEL SMITH.—The bill which is now on your table has been introduced in pursuance of the royal recommendation, in favour of our Catholic fellow-subjects; in consequence of that recommendation we solemnly pledged ourselves to the throne, and are now bound to grant them every relief and every privilege which liberality can dictate and wisdom approve, of course, every thing that may render them happy without rendering us insecure. I have heard it asked, "What would the Roman Catholics or their friends be at? What do they want? What do they desire? What would make them happy?" I will tell you in a word, Sir,—liberty. That for which some of the brightest characters of antiquity have bled and died, and without which no honourable man would wish to live. This is what they want, and what they wish for. But, Sir, when I speak of liberty, I would be understood to mean sober, salutary liberty. Liberty regulated by reason, and chastised by law; the attached friend of peace and good order, and the decided enemy of tumult and sedition. Words, Sir, which force upon my recollection the present state of a country once eminently distinguished above every nation of the earth, by the polished courtesy of her manners and the elegant charms of her social life; now distracted, convulsed; kept together merely by the force of external pressure; scourged by Divine wrath, and visited with a kind of epidemic *mania*. She furnishes to the philosophic mind an awful subject of mournful meditation. She tells to the rulers and legislators of the earth this momentous truth—"that if grievances do exist in a state, they should not be suffered to remain unredressed too long;" while to the peopled world she proclaims this still more important

lesson, "that whenever the giddy and infatuated multitude rashly dare to assume the reins of empire themselves, anarchy, confusion, wild misrule, and mad uproar, must inevitably ensue; and though the duration of such a volcanic state, of such a political chaos, can be but as a day, yet will it be a day marked with horrors—commencing in oppression and outrage, proceeding in discord and desolation, and closing in murder and in blood.

Sir, I ask pardon for this, I may say, involuntary digression, and return to my subject. An honourable and learned friend of mine [Mr. Chamberlaine] for whose every sentiment I have the highest respect, has said, (and he said it wisely and truly) that having given to your Catholic brethren the power of acquiring property equally as Protestants, you could not, without deviating from a fundamental principle of the constitution, have withheld from them the elective franchise, because by one of the primary principles of our constitution, the property of the country ought to be represented in Parliament; but my honourable friend added, "that he had not fortitude enough to grant, for the present, to the Catholics the privilege of sitting in this House." Sir, I will take the liberty of saying, that my honourable friend deceived himself. I will presume, on the present occasion, to know him better than he does himself. I know he has fortitude enough "to say every thing that is wise, and to do every thing that is just;" and I will tell, and endeavour to convince my honourable friend, that it is not more an inherent principle of our constitution, "that property should be represented," than "that property, talent, wisdom and integrity should represent." At the first institution of parliament, when the steady wisdom of our bearded ancestors shone like a newly created sun on the yet rude and indigested chaos of our constitution, the venerable assembly bore a name expressive of its distinguished sapience; and parliament, at that day, was a constellation of all the intellectual splendour and brilliancy of the country.

So, Sir, ought it to be for ever. Consider, for a moment, what the functions and the arduous duties of Parliament are; and who will hesitate to say, that in the discharge of them, every aid that talent, wisdom, property, or integrity can supply, will be indispensably necessary. Why then, in the name of Heaven! would you exile from those walls three-fourths of those essential and inestimable attributes?

You have to your Catholic brethren thrown open the gates of your university, and the fountains of all useful knowledge. You know (or you ought to know) that they will avail themselves of those advantages, and speedily, very speedily, attain to that degree of mental splendour that will dignify your country; and, if it be not our own faults, will adorn our senate.

But it has been said, the present bill grants much; and why will not the Catholics be contented and happy? Sir, I will not

deny that the present bill does grant much; but I do say, that it stops short of the point of wisdom, and far, very far, short of the point of liberality.

I have heard it said, that though the Catholic is not, by this bill, to be completely enfranchised, he yet ought to be completely satisfied. But, Sir, permit me to say, he knows but little of the human heart, and feels but little of its finest energies, who can suppose that any man, not conscious of personal delinquency, demerit, or inferiority, can be happy or contented in a society where he sees others enjoying political liberty in its widest expanse, while he is cabined and confined within the limits of a narrow and contracted circle. No, Sir, the more precious every human possession is, the less can we endure to be deprived of a single particle of it.

The sun of liberty must ever shine with a full orb; the slightest diminution—the most partial obscuration of that glorious luminary, is scarcely less grievous or less alarming than its total eclipse. Every good and every evil in life takes its character and its denomination, principally, from comparison; and hence it is that relative depression is positive slavery, and Protestant ascendancy—Roman Catholic misery. How, then, can we expect that our Catholic brethren will be happy, or finally contented with the justice done to them by the present bill? They are men, and subject to all the feelings and all the infirmities of human nature. Good God! Sir, what do we do? We administer to them the cup of liberty; we suffer them to taste it, and then we snatch it from their lips, as if our sole object was to tantalize them, and inflame the ardour of that thirst which we never meant to appease; and what rational motive can be assigned for this conduct? Does our own security require it? I say no; on the contrary, their happiness and our security are synonymous terms. How, Sir, in the royal language, shall we unite them with us in support of the constitution, but by making them happy under that constitution? And what but such an union, especially at the present crisis, can render our security, or the stability of the constitution complete? And what will you grant, Sir, by adopting the proposed clause, that ought not, and must not follow, sooner or latter, from the concessions of the bill in its present form? In my mind, nothing. I have heard it said that the elective franchise is merely political liberty; but that the privilege of sitting in Parliament is political power; but I have no idea of any power existing in the representative that did not previously exist in the constituent. Every power and every attribute, which the representatives possess in our constitution, flows and is derived from the constituent; and therefore a communication of the elective franchise is demonstratively a legislative communication of all that political power which by the exercise of that political franchise may be delegated. And let it be remembered that a

rejection of the proposed clause, will seem to be pointed against the most exalted and the most deserving of the Catholic body; for they alone can be supposed to become candidates for admission into this House. Why then, in the name of common sense, will you wish to depart from the principle of your own engagement, and seek by one and the same act to diminish your own security, and the happiness of your Catholic fellow subjects? And why, in defiance of one of the inherent principles of your constitution, exclude from this House three-fourths of the property, talent, wisdom and integrity of our country? In my mind, Sir, such a conduct cannot be satisfactory either to Protestant or Roman Catholic. A law limited like the present is a kind of *congé d'essire*, affecting to grant the franchise, but prohibiting the free exercise of it; giving the shadow, but withholding the substance.

Sir, I have more than once alluded to the relative numbers of our Catholic brethren; but let it not be surmised, that in doing so, I could be so mad or so mean, as to intend the language of intimidation. No, Sir, I meant to speak the language of supplication; I meant not to impress terror, but to excite the pity and awake the justice of the House. The feeling of my heart is, that no number would be too great to contend against, in a just and righteous cause. But, I cannot but think, that three millions of acknowledged loyal and faithful subjects, are too many to be oppressed, and to be excluded from the blessings of our free and happy constitution.

Let me therefore, before I sit down, conjure the House, by every thing that is, or ought to be, dear to men, to shuffle off all unnatural prejudices—to abjure all acrimonious suspicions—to take their Catholic brethren to their bosoms—to admit them into the temple of our liberties and our laws, and by one glorious act of magnanimous justice, give to them perfect content and happiness, and to our country everlasting peace and prosperity. Believe me, they will repay you gratefully—nay, nobly; they will give you in return, national wealth, national strength, name, rank, splendour and dignity amidst the kingdoms of the earth; they will give you their hands; they will give you their hearts; they will live with you, and, if necessary, they will die with you, blessing and defending that common sovereign whom we all adore, and that common constitution which we all venerate, and which you will then have wisely and liberally imparted to them.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE was surprised to hear what fell from the honourable gentleman. He had set out with saying, that he felt the bill as giving much, and yet in the course of his speech he had called it an insult: if this was so, every favour granted them had been an insult. He begged leave to remind the gentleman of a strong though vulgar proverb—"He that

gives every thing gives nothing;" in the present case this was true, in a very important degree. He hoped the honourable gentleman did not mean to insinuate to the Catholics a spirit of discontent; they were too grateful and too loyal to be discontented for an act of the most unparalleled liberality, and though he was sure the honourable gentleman did not mean those expressions in their full force, he was sorry that any thing so liable to misinterpretation should come from a man whose character and influence were, deservedly, so very eminent.

Mr. SMITH said, he would be sorry to think he had insinuated that the Catholics ought not to be satisfied at whatever the liberality of Parliament should think proper to bestow. He had only spoken his own opinions, drawn from the nature of the human mind, and he feared that it was not in their own power to be happy and content with a partial possession of political liberty; but even if Parliament did not please to go further, he trusted that the good conduct of Catholics would afford, in a future session, an additional argument in their favour.

Mr. C. ORMSBY said, he would not object to the motion, as it did not tie down the committee to adopt the measure. He observed that the bill had given complete satisfaction to no man; every one had some one objection or other to it; for his part he had objections himself to it. He would have been better pleased with the total expunging of the seventh clause. To entitle men to sit in Parliament, and yet not allow a Protestant king to give them employments in the state, was a very dangerous measure, and must of necessity injure the Government of the country in a very high degree. If he might argue from Protestants to Catholics, he would suppose they must act in opposition; for he had observed that people who had not received employments were generally in opposition. [A great laugh]. As to extending the right of franchise to forty-shilling Catholic freeholders, he was not prepared to say how safe it might be to admit such a multitude of voters at once (in the present situation of this kingdom) without, at the same time, some provision as to the practicability of carrying on an election by such a number; he thought that by a limitation of franchise to 10*l.* freeholders, the expunging of the seventh clause of the bill, and a reform founded on representation by property, would be produced by a perfect equality of representation; he believed the Catholics themselves did not wish to include forty-shilling voters; they were conscious of the imprudence of admitting such a multitude of electors at once, without some well-digested expedient as to the practicability of polling them; until this was done he could not consent to this extension, for he considered that such an election, where (as it was calculated) in some counties they might amount to twenty

thousand additional voters, would be rather a contest of arms than of independence, rather a pitched battle than an election; if the present clause should pass, and this restraint took place, there would be, perhaps, a few Catholics in Parliament for the counties, and some principal merchants for the great cities; but this would be nothing to the number which would be forced in by the number of forty-shilling freeholders; he therefore thought the House should make a stand where a stand could be made; suppose the electors should choose a Roman Catholic and persist in returning him, as in the case of Mr. Wilkes in England, the House would then be committed with the people, a situation which, he was sure, they did not desire.

These were his real sentiments, he did not wish to exclude forty-shilling freeholders because they were Catholics, but because they were a multitude: he wished for reform, and this bill went to the continuation of one of the abuses of parliamentary representation.

Mr. HARDY said, that the motion made by the honourable gentleman on the floor, should have his entire concurrence, as he thought it the necessary and immediate consequence of the measure then depending before the House. At the same time he was free to confess, that as to the general principle of gradual progression or emancipation, his ideas remained the same on that head, and they in fact coincided with those of the Roman Catholics themselves last session; for their petition, which was then so unfortunately rejected, went, or at least their wishes at that time were limited to a moderate share in the elective franchise. This, in his opinion, was a gradual emancipation; he therefore lamented that versatile and rapid mode of legislation, which so entirely changed its object, and at one time haughtily denied, and at another precipitantly conceded. He deprecated this course of proceeding, not as to the motion then before the House, but as to the effect which it must have upon its dignity, if pursued in other matters of great national importance. On the twenty-first of February, 1792, the House unnecessarily and contumeliously rejected a petition from the Catholics, of a very moderate nature, indeed, as to the elective franchise, and almost on the same day twelvemonth, not only an extended franchise was yielded to, but a proposition was entertained of giving the Roman Catholics seats in Parliament. He had supported the petition, and if it had not been rejected, the House might have gone on more gradually in this business, and whatever concessions were made, would, in all probability, be more gratefully received; but a legislature moving rapidly from one extreme to another, was, upon the general principle, a serious evil to any country.

As the House seemed desirous to go into a committee on the bill, he wished, before the Speaker left the chair, to say a word

or two to the bill itself. It had his entire support, though he should have gone further. The great and leading object of the bill was the restoration of the elective franchise; it was the hinge on which the whole turned; and when the House went into the committee, he should be glad to hear the sentiments of gentlemen from the southern and western counties, for as the majority of the inhabitants of these counties consisted of Roman Catholics, those gentlemen would, from their knowledge of the property of that part of the country, be enabled to say with some degree of precision, what probable effect this bill would have if the elective franchise was given to the Roman Catholics at forty-shillings. Certainly, whatever tended to individual representation ought to be studiously avoided, but the great desideratum, in this business, was to give all ranks of people, whether immediately or circuitously, an interest in the English constitution; for the man of the humblest fortune was as deeply interested in its preservation as the richest man; in some respect he was more so, for wealth, wherever conveyed, would be attended with some portion of consequence, but under a free constitution alone, could a man of limited circumstances look for the protection of equal laws, or have any chance of gratifying that ambition, which inhered more or less in the breast of every one, and which might lead such a man to aspire to any distinction in the state. He should therefore give a full participation of political rights to his Roman Catholic brethren, though he was aware that there were many who considered such participation, as communicating no essential advantage whatever to any country. To such assertions he could only answer by holding out the example of England, which surely had not risen to her present grandeur by commerce alone, but by that equal enjoyment which all ranks of men had of the English constitution. The lowest peasant and artisan had there a certain manliness of sentiment. Why? Because they were conscious that they were independent. The peasantry, and all the lower orders here, were obsequious, cringing and servile. Why? Because they were not freemen. It was possible that the next generation might see the peasantry of Ireland more industrious than the present; but the blessings of industry, and the English constitution, should always go hand in hand together; it had been always so in England. He here took notice of some observations of Mr. Hume as to this point: Mr. Hume, as a lover of absolute monarchy, gave a very recent origin to the liberties of England; and Mr. Paine, as an admirer of pure democracy, insisted that they had no liberty whatever. The genuine result of both speculations, if pushed to the extreme, was complete and unequivocal tyranny.

He then animadverted on what had fallen from a right honourable baronet over the way [Sir Hercules Langrishe]. The right honourable gentleman had said, that the bill contained mat-

ter perfectly adequate to the wishes of the Roman Catholics; that the vessel was now completely charged, and any additional freight might be the means of oversetting her. When the bill was brought in last year, which gave the Catholics the bar, &c. a similar language was then held; and as to the present proposition of overloading the vessel, he thought that it was of that nature as to enable her to go more evenly and quietly into harbour. In a word, he was glad the present policy had been adopted as to the Roman Catholics, and only lamented that it was not adopted many years ago; if it had, Ireland would have been a country far superior to what it was at that hour.

Mr. JOHN O'NEILL trusted the House would, for a moment, indulge him with a few words. He would be sorry to give a silent vote in the discussion of a question of such moment. He had been last session one of the majority on the rejection of the petition. Amongst his own constituents there had been two different opinions on the subject, and he had from them two petitions of different and adverse natures to present. Since that time the subject which had before been very little considered, had received a full, ample and able discussion; the event had been that the claim of the Catholics was now universally admitted from one end of the kingdom to the other. He therefore thought that as their desires were founded in justice, they should be acceded to by Parliament. The bill had been introduced with the greatest propriety; he wished it had gone farther, as it was better when claims were brought forward worthy of concession, to grant complete and effectual relief, than by any modified measures to destroy the effect desired by the speech from the throne. By admitting Catholics to the representation, their property and their talents would be a pledge for our constitution; but it could never be secure when only the lower order was interested, and the aristocracy rendered hostile. On a former occasion the smallest concession would have been received with gratitude; they had since that time examined their claims, and being convinced of their justice, they feel they are their rights; this is their language from the south, echoed and applauded by the north, and the liberality of Parliament, now displayed, would unite them in the strongest bonds of friendship, with the Parliament and constitution.

Mr. CUFFE said, gentlemen had demanded, why the House which last year rejected the petition of the Roman Catholics, should this year receive it with so much complacency and favour? He answered, that their manner of petitioning this year was very different from their manner of last year, and that this year, for the first time, their claims came recommended from the throne; which circumstance was, of itself, sufficient to entitle them to

respect? There was besides another reason, the people who had sent them their representatives into that House, had altered their opinions since the last year, they now recommended concessions to the Roman Catholics, and it was the duty of the representatives to obey; but if gentlemen on the other side condemned the supporters of the bill, in going so far as the bill goes, how much more blameable would they be were they to go as far as the same gentlemen desired them to go? These gentlemen say the bill will not be satisfactory; is it because they wish it may not? He believed it was; he believed that their zeal arose not from any wish to serve the Roman Catholics; but to injure the Government. But the Roman Catholics had too much good sense, too much discernment, not to see through these cob-web pretences of their pretended friends; they would now have a greater stake in the country than heretofore; that stake will make it their interest to support the constitution, and without pretending to any red-hot zeal, he would vote for conferring on them the advantages contained in the bill, as in so doing he would have the satisfaction of bowing to the opinion of his Sovereign, and acceding to the wishes of the people.

Colonel BLAQUIERE expressed great indignation and surprize at the motion for Roman Catholics to sit in Parliament; he really thought, from what he had heard in debate, that some gentlemen had forgot their oath of allegiance. He denied that his Majesty had recommended the surrender of the Protestant establishment; but he feared the House was in part composed of what it ought not to be, or that surrender would not be proposed: it would be time enough for such a proposal when the Roman Catholics had gotten what he hoped they would not get. He opposed the motion.

▲ Sir J. COTTER had no doubt, if the Catholics were permitted to serve in Parliament, but the House would be filled with them; the majority of the electors, in three provinces, consisting of Catholics. To have the representation Protestant, he thought, was a necessary counterpoise; this motion would not give them political liberty, but power. In England, where they are fewer in number, in proportion to the mass of the people, than they are here, they are not permitted to sit in Parliament; yet, there they enjoy the most perfect degree of civil liberty, and were obliged to pay no more taxes than such as they pay who impose them; which was the essence of civil liberty. If we have no established religion, he observed, we shall soon have no religion. How must that established religion be upheld? Only by giving advantages to those who profess it, and by confining to them, exclusively, the great offices of trust and power.

Mr. F. HUTCHINSON replied to Mr. Cusse;—he had said, the measure was proposed to embarrass government. For his own part, he neither regarded one side of the House nor the other; and he did not think, that on a question of this kind, an honest man would consider either side. Another gentleman wished for gradual admission to the legislative powers;—the principle was a wise one, but it might be necessary for the House to remember, on what principle they were now acting. He had, on former occasions, said they should yield to the impressions of the public mind; and he had been told, this was the language of intimidation. No man feared more than he did the displeasure of the House, but he would not blink the situation of them, and of the country. They were now, he asserted, acting as wise legislators ought, yielding to the current, which, if opposed, would sweep with it every thing that was ancient and valuable in the constitution. He thought the measure should not be clogged by any unnecessary opposition; the time for penal laws was past. To draw inferences unfavourable to mens principles, from their religious belief, was, he said, the foundation of all persecution; every thing like it must now be given up. The minister, he said, deserved well of his country for the bill as far as it went, yet he intreated him to grant enfranchisement in its fullest extent; it was that only that could give unanimity and peace to the country.

Major HOBART said, he had been called on by the last honourable gentleman to admit of no penalties on men for their religious belief; the principle of the bill, he said, was perfect equality between Protestant and Catholic; and when it should pass, there would remain no statute pointed against the Catholic as such. But as long as an established religion was necessary, so long would it be necessary that the King must be acknowledged head of the church. For his part, he thought an established religion necessary; the mischiefs resulting from the subversion of it was evident in France; irreligion and anarchy are inseparable, and to the existence of religion an established religion was necessary. As to the suddenness with which the House was about to grant the franchise, he thought the bill made their admission as gradual as possible; but he could not see how the restitution of the franchise could be at all limited. The changing circumstances of times, had made the change necessary in the situation of the Catholics, the danger of making that change had arisen from two causes; 1st, the connection of the Catholics with the Pope; 2dly, the fear of an union with the French. As to the first of these causes, he thought no man now entertained any serious fear of the Pope's power; and with respect to the other, he thought too well of the Catholics to believe them capable of approving, in any degree, of the abominable principles or practices of France; there was,

therefore, now no danger whatever to be apprehended from them. In those counties where the population was mostly Catholic, he knew that the conduct of that unhappy people was held in the highest detestation; he was sorry to say, that in some other parts of the kingdom, where the majority of the people were not Catholics, this was not the case; but, on the contrary, some men had gone so far as to imitate their fraternities.

He concluded by declaring, that he had brought in the bill in the firm belief, that a religious establishment was necessary, and on that ground he would support the clauses of it.

Mr. VANDELEUR was against the motion, till the fate of the 40s. freeholds should be finally settled.

Mr. EGAN supported the motion.

Mr. WESLEY said, he had no objection to giving the Roman Catholics the benefits of the constitution, and, in his opinion, the bill conferred them in an ample degree; but the motion of the honourable gentleman seemed calculated to promote disunion. With the bill, as it stands, the Protestants are satisfied, and the Roman Catholics contented: Why then agitate a question which may disturb both?

A gentleman has said, that admitting the forty-shilling freeholders of the Roman Catholic persuasion to vote at elections, will annihilate the Protestant establishment in Ireland; and he has founded this assertion upon a supposition, that the Roman Catholics will, in voting, be directed by their priests; but have not Roman Catholics, like Protestants, various interests and various passions by which they are swayed? The influence of their landlords—their good or bad opinion of the candidates—their own interests—and a thousand other motives? It appeared to him that they would not vote in a body, or as had been supposed, if the bill should pass in its present form; but if the motion of the honourable gentleman should be adopted, then indeed they would undoubtedly unite in support of Roman Catholic candidates.

Mr. A. HAMILTON said, he would hope for the attention and indulgence of the House, in permitting him to state, very shortly, the principle on which he supported the motion of his honourable friend. To the general object and principle of the bill introduced by the right honourable gentleman, he thought it now almost unnecessary to advert; the admission of the Catholics of Ireland into the constitution, was a measure sanctioned by the wishes of their constituents, and ratified by the approbation of parliament, who had proceeded so far in carrying into effect this wise and salutary purpose. He did not believe any man could be so

short-sighted as not to perceive, that at this moment, which must be considered a moment of extreme peril to the constitution, it was not equally the duty and interest of Parliament, by extending to them a full participation of it, to pledge for its preservation and security three-fourths of our fellow-subjects: men, he would assert, loyal both from principle and religion. The bill, he said, had been brought forward with every possible advantage by the right honourable gentleman. No man, either in or out of the House, could doubt that his object was to effect perfect reconciliation and unanimity. By it he was sensible they should make a great progress towards both, though he did not conceive, from circumstances that had occurred, even since its introduction, that it went the full length of liberality and concession, that he thought it might do with safety and with wisdom. By it he trusted we were about to lay the first stone in the temple of concord; but he confessed he would wish even now for more. He would wish that the House would proceed at once, and without delay, to the accomplishment of this great work, which, at this time, when the constitution was most in danger of an attack, would prove its best defence and security, and would enable it to defy the efforts of its enemies, either from within or from without. After going the lengths they had done by the bill, and after the Catholics had solemnly renounced every tenet that was politically obnoxious, could any man say they were not fit to be trusted with all constitutional power? By the bill, the House would declare itself not afraid of the sentiments and principles of the Catholic constituent. Why then should they be afraid of those sentiments and principles deduced from him through his Catholic representative. By giving them equality of suffrage with the Protestant, parliament would invest the lower, the more numerous, and, of course, the less enlightened part of the Catholic community, with that privilege which must, in fact, include every other; and yet, if it went no farther, it would establish an exclusion which, even if it were desirable, must be but temporary and ineffectual against the higher and more enlightened order. Those men who had the deepest stake in the country, and who from every motive of interest and ambition, must be pledged as much as they were themselves for its prosperity and advantage. If, after giving what they were about to do by the bill, it were possible for them long to retain what they now sought to withhold, what must be the consequence?—If they were not apprehensive that the Catholic would have an interest and pursuit incompatible with the present establishment, no man would presume to say that they ought not to participate, in the fullest measure, of the constitution; but if they had such apprehensions, how did they provide against it by the proposed exclusion. They would compel them to chuse for their representatives, men nominally not of their own persuasion, but men who, from the ambiguous,

fictional character which they will be obliged to act, are not likely to be men from whose principle, connections, or property, you can have any security; they would be men who, sensible that they derived all their importance from being so chosen, could not presume to resist the dictates of their constituents, and would be rather their slaves than their representatives. Would the constitution then be safer in their hands, than in the hands of those who would afford it every one of those pledges; who, from their natural and hereditary influence, would be able to guide the sentiments of the people, and who, from a degree of spirit, laudable in the extreme, disdained an occasional or verbal conformity, that might be attributed to self-interested or sordid consideration?—Could it be supposed that such men as he alluded to, conscious that they possessed all these requisites—men of liberal and enlightened minds and education, knowing and feeling the blessings of the constitution, and their ability, as well as inclination to defend it, would acquiesce, with perfect satisfaction, under such an exclusion? Their weight then might not only not be thrown into the scale of attachment to the present constitution and government, but into the opposite one; the odious line of separation and exclusion is still kept up, and they would lose all the inestimable advantages which must result from community of privilege, of interest, and of intercourse. He added, it was not his wish to put this distinction in an invidious light, but that he did not wish that it should be in the power of any of those disseminators of sedition, whom we had reason to know were so industrious in this country to do so. He would be sorry they should have it in their power to tell the people, that Parliament had not followed the example of their constituents, who had generously offered the participation of their rights to their fellow subjects of every description, while their representatives rigorously and inviolably persisted in retaining an exclusive monopoly.

He concluded by saying, that he conceived the question to be merely, whether the proposition made by the honourable gentleman should be adopted now or hereafter; for that it would be adopted hereafter, no man who heard him could have a doubt. For his part, he conceived every motive of expediency and wisdom suggested to the House, that this was the moment when every distinction should be done away. Parliament had, by one great effort, thrown off a load of prejudice and suspicion; it was absurd still to retain any part of that burden, by which the certain and speedy progress of the nation to concord and security should be retarded or delayed.

Mr. BROOKE conceived the clause went to the complete surrender of the Protestant establishment. But if the elective franchise were given unlimited, all would be given up in that, and he therefore would vote for the admission of the clause.

Mr. COOTE said, that if the motion introduced by the honourable member had a tendency to subvert the religious establishment, there could not be a doubt but that the civil establishment must fall together with it—and when your religious establishment shall be overturned, farewell to your liberties—liberty and property will then be idle and delusive names, as they are now in France. In the race that has been run, and the contest for concession to the Catholics during this session, it was difficult for an individual, firmly and unalterably attached to the Protestant interest, to know how to steer. There was in politics, as in a fever, a paroxysm that bewilders the imagination. He was, however, impressed with one fixed and unalterable opinion, that if Ireland is to preserve its connection with Great Britain, a Protestant kingdom, the power and government of Ireland must continue in the hands of Protestants: this was the policy of the revolution; for this purpose the spirit and principles of the revolution went to the confirming and establishing in Ireland a Protestant government. If the motion of the honourable gentleman was acceded to, and the Catholics admitted to seats in your House, there is an end to your Protestant religion, government, and establishments—they all will be buried in one grave. He was aware that the bill did not instantly give into the hands of the Catholics, the Irish government; but it surely does extend to them very great power and weight in the country. He hoped and trusted that the Catholics would be completely satisfied by the consequence and power they would derive by this bill; and if they should be so, and that the question would be at rest, he would not oppose his judgment to the wishes of so many gentlemen as countenanced the bill, and who had great character and large property at stake; that, therefore, he had rather yield to the current running so strong for the bill, than resist it. If, however, nothing less than having seats in Parliament will content the Catholics, and to have in their hands the government of the kingdom, he trusted, that the union and strength of the Protestants would resist such expectations. Fully satisfied he was, that if the Protestant interest was disposed to stand forward, it had ample strength to protect itself; that the clause in the bill which extends to the lower orders of the Catholics a right of voting he objected to, because he knew, from his own observation and experience of elections, that the depravity of the low and indigent electors was one of the greatest evils of the constitution, and which loudly called for, and demanded a remedy; to increase the number would not eradicate the evil; and if the constitution is wounded, it is owing to the voluntary and complicated corruption of the lower orders of people who vote at elections.

Mr. JACKSON was for a total emancipation of the Catholics, of course approved of the bill as far as it went, and was friendly to the motion.

Mr. HANCOCK expressed great happiness at participating with the Catholics the blessings of the constitution. He thought they deserved every thing parliament could confer on them, and would therefore support the motion of his honourable friend in the fullest manner. By this means, he hoped, our admirable constitution would be preserved, and transmitted to posterity, complete and inviolable.

Mr. DALY. Mr. Speaker, the very particular situation in which I stand, in common with several other gentlemen in this House on this subject, will, I trust, be a sufficient apology for taking up the time of the House, at this late hour, in talking of myself. The county which I have the honour to represent, assembled to take Mr. Byrne's letter into consideration;—I am not afraid or ashamed to say now, that I joined most heartily with the majority of that meeting in disapproving of Mr. Byrne's parochial elections, as I think it favoured a little too much of the present French manners; but, Sir, I am ashamed to acknowledge that I joined in aspersing Mr. Byrne, for asserting that he had the highest authority for declaring, that if the Catholics were united, they would be successful in their application to their most gracious sovereign; the event has proved but too evidently, that Mr. Byrne spoke the truth; and the only reparation I can make him, is to retort the very words of our resolution on the right honourable and honourable gentlemen who contradicted him, and to assert, that the language which they made use of was ill-founded, and delusive in the extreme. I joined with the majority of that meeting also in declaring, that we did not think the elective franchise should be extended to the Roman Catholics at present, but we did not go quite so far as at other meetings, where gentlemen (rather higher in the confidence of Government than I am) attended; we did not say, that it should never be granted; we only declared, that we would oppose every unconstitutional attempt of the Roman Catholics to obtain it. As their present mode of application cannot be deemed so, as the levelling principle with which this country was threatened, has, within the last three or four months, drawn the Protestant and Catholic closer than, I think, fifty years of social intercourse would have done; and as the right honourable gentleman has determined that we shall go the great length of the bill before us, I trust, shall not either in my own county, or in this House, be considered as acting inconsistently by the vote which I shall give this night—a vote, Sir, which I hope will deprive that right honourable gentleman and his successors, for ever, of one expedient by which they have been enabled to withhold from this country its rights, political and commercial, exciting religious jealousies among the inhabitants of this country, and leave them only their grand expedient, which, when standing alone, will not, I trust, continue long in force; I will not, Sir, I need not, make use of the foul expression.

Mr. BUSHE [who spoke leaning on a crutch] said, he was sorry that he was not able to speak as fully as he wished on two subjects, which were near his heart. The one was, that the bill should pass; the other, that having passed, it should have the good effects which had been expected from it. He was sorry to observe, that much of what had been said this night militated against both these objects, and that the tendency of much that he heard, was to prevent the bill from passing the Lords, and to make the Catholics discontented, if it should pass them. He thought that Mr. Curran's reply to Sir J. Blaquierie only confirmed the force of the right honourable baronet's argument. Can any man doubt, that their Lordship's had as good a right as we to reject a bill which would affect their House as well as ours. We might easily perceive, that some gentlemen voted to give the Catholics every thing, from a fit of indignation at their getting so much. If we adopt Mr. Knox's amendment, we might cause another set of reasoners to spring up; and as there are gentlemen who now say—if you give so much, you may as well give the whole; so there may be other gentlemen, or noblemen, who may say—if we are to give all or nothing, we will give nothing.

The learned gentleman had asked the advocates for gradual emancipation, how they would form their scale. I wish to form no scale of emancipation, for this bill is perfect emancipation. But if he wishes to know how I could form a scale of concession, I will tell him:—My first act should be, to give equal liberty, which is done by this bill; the second, to give equal power. If gentlemen think that admission into the senate is necessary to liberty, they think neither agreeable to any sound theory, nor to the practice of free nations. Even in England there is a difference between the qualifications necessary to be an elector, and that which entitles a man to be one of the elected. In another free country, Switzerland, there are greater differences between the qualifications necessary to entitle a man to be a senator, and those which make him a free subject; and, in different ways, the same principle prevailed in the constitutions of Athens, of Sparta, and of Rome; yet shall we be told, that the people of those countries were not free? We are told, that the grant of the elective franchise will in time bring on the right of sitting in parliament. I think it very likely that it may, if the Catholic body be not as corrupted by the adulation with which they are addressed, as to depart from that temper and moderation which has distinguished them. I do not deprecate the day in which we may grant them a full participation of power; but if we should do so, that measure should be accompanied by another—a satisfactory, ecclesiastical establishment, paid out of the treasury, and no such measure is now proposed. For it is idle to say, that we should have nothing left to contend for, if we gave them seats in Parliament.

With respect to our church establishment, we should not have that *dem velle, idem nolle*, which the learned member speaks of. We should clearly have one great distinct interest, and the situation of the country would be this—that the Catholics would have, perhaps superior power, equal pretensions, and not equal advantages. He thought this would be a bad situation, and that it would be a source of discord.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE.—I am at a loss which most to admire the great abilities of the honourable gentleman who made the motion, or his generous sentiment. I am not, however, disposed to add any new matter to the present bill, least it should stop it in its next stage, and by such means lose it altogether. The bill, in its present form, I think a total emancipation of the Catholics, as far as it is consistent with the constitution; and as that has been always my land-mark, the present bill has my entire approbation.

Every person who knows me, must be sensible how much I have at heart the interest of the Roman Catholics; I should act against my nature, should not that be the case; I am descended from them, and my nearest and dearest connections are amongst them.

The situation of the public affairs seem at present to be so critical and extraordinary, that it calls upon every man to declare his political opinion; and, with leave of the House, I shall say a few words on that subject.

I am descended from a noble family in this country, who lost high honours and extensive properties for their loyalty, and a support of their principles; and as principle is the ground upon which every man is right, I think myself honoured in being descended from a race of loyal and honest men; they sacrificed every thing that was dear in this life to support a race of kings, in their time, to whom they swore fealty and allegiance:—I, their remainder, will declare before God and the world, that was I now in possession of the properties and honours of my ancestors, I would risque them all for my gracious Sovereign on the throne, and his family.

I think myself not singular in this way of thinking, for I believe that it is the natural disposition of all the Catholics of Ireland. Let us look back and see how that order of men have conducted themselves from the year 1688 to the year 1778? If they have any enemies they must acknowledge, that during that period there is no instance in the history of mankind, of any people having suffered such a degree of violence and oppression as they did; and what must now seem wonderful to every man, that a race of brave people had (under such cruel circumstances as have been related) conducted themselves peaceably and quietly; and though both in

the year 1715 and 1745, when England and Scotland were in rebellion against the present family upon the throne, and when the emissaries of the exiled family came into this country, with promises of restoration of liberty and property, provided they went into rebellion against that family, they, to a man, rejected it, and there was no period in which that people conducted themselves more amenable to the laws and the magistracy. The Earl of Chesterfield, being then lord lieutenant, had been often heard to say, that "the Catholics of this kingdom had conducted themselves more peaceably than any other description of men," and reported them as such to the then government of England. Therefore, Sir, if we are to judge of what is to happen, by the past, we have every reason to have the utmost confidence in the loyalty and peaceable conduct of the Catholic people; and we will act wisely to attach such a body of men to the strength of the Protestant interest of this kingdom.

Sir J. BLAQUIERE thought the object of the clause was, in fact, conceded already in granting the elective franchise. He urged the argument of inconsistency, in almost unanimously rejecting, last year, an humble petition, and this year deliberating on placing them in both Houses of Parliament. If the clause were introduced, he thought it would probably induce the loss of the bill. The friends of the clause therefore would counteract themselves; and might, by such an inadvertence, bring upon the country one of the most fatal calamities that could, at this moment, befall it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. The House, in general, being determined to convey to the Roman Catholics the solid and essential benefits of the constitution, the shortest means by which they could attain their purpose, would most certainly be the wisest: It was not wise to direct the speeches of the gentlemen of that House to the people, and to speak to their passions; it was a subject in which wise men would act, and good men would keep silence. No man could foresee the event of this business; if it turned out happily, as he earnestly wished it might, good men would rejoice; if otherwise, they would have the consolation of having acted for the best; but on no account was it wise or honest to appeal to the passions of the people.

It had on all sides been agreed, that the general principle of giving to the Roman Catholic the full benefit of the constitution, was right. On a general principle no man could deny it; but local necessity, our situation with relation to the Protestant crown of England, made it necessary for Ireland to act as England had acted—and they ought not to be ashamed to acknowledge that that was the only ground on which they could maintain the necessity of their measures. England now thinks it wise to alter

her conduct to Roman Catholics ;—it is a strong reason for us to do the same ; it would be very unwise for us to pursue a system different from England. Let us therefore take the measure as it is offered—by so doing, we do not take the responsibility upon ourselves ; but if we alter the bill, we are responsible for the consequences. I will therefore agree to it *in toto*.

As to all the flourishing professions that gentlemen have made of their attachment to Roman Catholics, that people were not silly enough to be so wheedled ; if any man wished to court them as political friends, let him do it by acts, not by professions. If any man has acted liberally towards them in his private capacity, that man was entitled to their friendship, and his professions would be believed ; but if otherwise they had sufficient discernment to know the motive of his present flourishing, and though they would be glad of the benefits of his vote, they would despise him for his occasional conformity to popular opinion.

English connections, and Irish prosperity, should be our object—disunion as equally destructive to both ; and if the Roman Catholic will fairly meet and embrace the constitution, I will be happy at consenting to the grants now proposed ; but if he shall be ungrateful and unsatisfied, because something is withheld (and surely we ought not to step before England in concession) I shall lament the generosity of this day.

My earliest impressions led me to maintain Protestant principles ; my experience justified and confirmed them : yet am I ready to meet this new system, because I am convinced that the liberality of the public mind alone can save this country ; that liberality would of itself alone have totally obliterated all distinctions in twenty years, and Protestants and Roman Catholics would have coalesced, by moderate and gradual concession on one side, and rational gratitude and affection on the other. I fear this violent transition will revive and awake animosities that were almost forgot : I would rather we had remained as we were for some time, or proceeded with less precipitation ; but I will take the bill as it is offered. I am not afraid of yielding up our power to our own countrymen for the safety of Ireland and of England. I do own, that though the measure were right upon principle, it is not in the moment of danger it should be adopted : there was no such pressing necessity for surrendering the Protestant power ; but the thing being determined, we should give it up with the best grace we can. I think the moment ill chosen and the experiment dangerous, to do away at once the principle of a century. I do not blame the Roman Catholics for their endeavour to acquire the ascendancy ; in their case I should have done the same thing, and in the progress of our approaching dangers they shall forget all ancient animosities, and fully and fairly stand by their Protestant countrymen, and support the interests of the British empire.

I shall be ashamed to see the least distinction remain amongst us hereafter.

The question being at last put, a division took place.

Ayes	—	—	69
Noes	—	—	163
	Majority		94

After which the House adjourned to Wednesday.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1793.

Mr. BAGWELL presented a bill for the better preservation of public roads, and the encouragement of waggons; which was received and read a first time.

Mr. OSBORNE moved, "That it be an instruction to the committee of the whole House on the Roman Catholic bill, to receive a clause, communicating to Roman Catholics the benefits and privileges conveyed to foreign Protestant merchants and artificers settling in any borough or town corporate—by the act of the 14th and 15th of Charles II. so far as relates to working, buying and selling."

Mr. MASON demanded the object of the clause.

Mr. OSBORNE replied, that by an act of Charles II. certain descriptions of his Majesty's subjects had obtained certain privileges and immunities therein specified. Those descriptions were artificers, dealers, &c.

His object, therefore, was to grant to the Roman Catholic inhabitants of this country, all the privileges and immunities specified in the said act. The words of the act were "buying, selling, working." He avowed but the act itself, he meant no more.

Mr. BAGWELL warmly supported the clause, as enforcing more essential advantages on the Roman Catholics than it is intended by the whole of the present bill to grant them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that that act, in his sense, was intended to encourage an increase of strangers, the corporate towns being but thinly inhabited. He thought, and does still think, it a question of as doubtful consequence as any other before the House. For it may turn out, that a Catholic, settling in such a place, may be entitled to all the immunities and advantages which a native franchised Protestant would.

The clause, after some amendments, was agreed to.

The House then resolved itself into a committee on the bill ;
Mr. DAY in the chair.

Mr. TRENCH rose, he said, with a wish to expedite the bill, and to remove some prejudices which had been industriously spread. It had been confidently asserted, that if the Roman Catholics were not granted all that Protestants enjoy—if any distinction or reservation was made, they would not be contented. If he had entertained the least idea that such would be their conduct, they never would have had his support ; but since the bill was brought in, and had been printed and published, he had conversed with many of the most respectable gentlemen of the Roman Catholic religion, particularly from his own part of the country, and they every one approved the bill, and expressed their approbation in terms of the highest loyalty to their king, and the strongest attachment to the constitution ; they declared, that when the bill, which they acknowledged conferred great benefits upon them, should pass, they would retire to their homes, filled with gratitude to the Government of the country, and to the Parliament ; and they desired him to make this public declaration in their name, and to add, that their future conduct should manifest the sense they entertained of so great a favour. He therefore held it, that any gentleman who, in their name, should hold a different language, and say, they were not satisfied, was not a friend to the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

The first clause of the bill being read, the ATTORNEY GENERAL made several amendments, to enable the bill more fully to effect its object.

Mr. DUNGEON then proposed an amendment to the purport of the clause he had obtained leave to introduce. After a tedious conversation, his amendment was rejected, and he was advised to introduce a substantive clause.

Mr. ALEXANDER, (of Derry) said, he admired the ingenuity of gentlemen in finding out clauses, which gave them opportunities of making flaming speeches, and shewing their mighty zeal for the Roman Catholics ; but surely there never was a more unnecessary clause than that so warmly insisted upon by the honourable gentleman ; for he would defy any man to shew a single instance where any artificer had been prevented from working, buying, or selling, in any borough or town corporate.

Doct^r DUNGEON said, he had to propose some amendments, which, as they went to the whole merits of the bill, would necessarily demand some time for discussion. He had, upon the introduction of the bill, pretty fully expressed his opposition to it ; he

had given his reasons for that opposition ; and to those reasons he adhered, notwithstanding the animadversions of some gentlemen, and the mis-statements of others : those animadversions and mis-statements he was now ready to refute, and he trusted he should be heard in spite of the roar of political projectors, or the flimsy orations of those who trade in declamation ; men who stamp, and storm and rage, with frantic gestures and dishevelled hair, like the Pythian priestesses of old—or affright their audience with convulsive screams and distorted features, like the gypsies of modern times.

After this exordium, he went at large into the bill, and concluded with moving the following amendment : “ That no Roman Catholic shall vote in any county, for any member to sit in Parliament, unless such Roman Catholic shall have a freehold of 20*l.* a year value in said county ; or in any borough, unless he have a freehold of 20*l.* a-year, (any where in the kingdom) or is possessed of property to the amount of 1000*l.*”

In the course of his speech the doctor had declared, that if the Protestant interest was surrendered to the Roman Catholics, as by this bill it would be, an union with England would be the necessary consequence ; the Protestants would have no refuge but in an union ;—and rather than be the slave of the Roman Catholics, he would himself be the man to propose an union—[Mr. EGAN here interrupting him]—

The SPEAKER rose in his place, and said, he would recommend it to the honourable gentleman not to interrupt the member while speaking, unless he committed a breach of order ; but while he was advancing a political opinion, no man had a right to call him to order.

Doctor DUIGENAN again said, he would, in the event of that bill, fly to England for refuge ; and if he could not be free here, he would sue to be the fellow-subject of the Englishman, who valued liberty, and respected the Protestant religion—He would be the man to propose an union.

Mr. PERY said, he had been so personally alluded to in the speech of the learned doctor, that he felt himself under a necessity of trespassing on the committee. He acknowledged himself obliged to the doctor for his professions of respect to him and his family ; but he had hoped, when he was stating his arguments, he would have stated them entire, and not partially. He said, he had stated, as a reason for the favourable opinion he entertained of the Roman Catholics, their convention, which conduct was, in his mind, peculiarly discreet and laudable. At the close of that convention they had framed a petition, neither false nor treasonable—and to complete their propriety of behaviour,

they had published a circular letter to the people of their communion, recommending a peaceable demeanor and obedience to the laws. He had also stated, that a great change had taken place in the Protestant mind, which was the fact. For all these reasons, (which he had stated as a plain country gentleman, without trick of profession or artifice,) he thought it right to support the present bill; and he would not be turned aside from his intention, by a bigotry worthy the middle ages, or by the hope of favour from any dignified class of men whatsoever.

Mr. HOBART—After what has fallen from the honourable gentleman, it becomes necessary for me to trouble the House for a short time. By the honourable gentleman's amendment it is proposed, that the elective franchise shall be conferred on such Roman Catholics only, as possess freeholds of twenty pounds a-year; or who in boroughs possess one thousand pounds a-year. Sir, it has ever struck me, that when the same political expediency which made it necessary to deprive the Roman Catholics of the elective franchise should no longer exist, that privation should cease with it—and that when their principles should no longer be dangerous to the Protestant establishment of Ireland, they should be restored to the enjoyment of political rights, upon the broad basis of equality. If this opinion is not well-founded, we had better not grant them any at all; if we cannot confide in them, we had better withhold every privilege; but if we can confide in them, as I do most perfectly, let us grant with generosity and without limitation.

The honourable gentleman has stated, that many of the names which are subscribed to the Roman Catholic petition, may be found in the roll of the united Irishmen. I am sorry for it, Sir—I am sorry that the name of any of his Majesty's loyal subjects should be found in that roll; but surely this is not a reason for continuing disqualifications upon the whole body of Roman Catholics, because some of them are disaffected; if so, it would at any time be in the power of a few malignant men to draw distress and punishment upon the rest of their community; the honourable gentleman must then shew that the body of the Roman Catholics in general are disaffected, or his argument has no weight.

The honourable gentleman had charged his Majesty's ministers in England with folly and with treachery: I will take the liberty to say, that if, in this time of general danger, they turned their thoughts to his Majesty's subjects, who had at all manifested themselves steadfast friends of the constitution, it was no very great mark of their folly; and if the Roman Catholic had, for a series of years, and under the most trying circumstances, proved himself that friend; and, if by granting him at this time so much favours as the House should think proper, and no more—

he could be united with his Protestant fellow-subjects in supporting that constitution against all its enemies; the minister who recommended such measures as would promote that union, had very little cause to fear the charge of treachery.

I will say, Sir, that the favours proposed are warranted and induced by the conduct of Parliament towards the Roman Catholics. Parliament have at several times manifested their approbation of the principle of the bill, by repealing several of the popery laws, and by granting Roman Catholics the right of acquiring property, which, when acquired, naturally brings with it the claim to that influence in the state—which property should possess.

The honourable gentleman has stated what was done in King James's parliament, as an argument against granting Roman Catholics the same privileges that they were permitted to retain even after the revolution. Does he forget, Sir, that that Parliament acted as the Parliament of a kingdom separated and disunited from her political connection with England? If he wishes to shew, that when disunited from England, the Parliament of Ireland would act as that of James II. acted, no one will deny it; we all know that the safety of the Protestants of Ireland depends upon our connection with England; we know till Ireland has a separate king, the forfeited property can never be re-assumed, the Protestant interest can never be overthrown, and therefore we take every measure which can tend to strengthen the connection with England.

Another honourable gentleman has said, that it is vain for us to think of with-holding what the bill retains if we grant what the bill confers. I cannot agree with that honourable gentleman, for, by what we are granting, the Protestant interest can never be injured while we have the security of a Protestant king.

An honourable gentleman has charged the British minister with a design in promoting the measure of creating division and animosity in this country: to the conviction of every man who hears it, the charge refutes itself:—for if there was one measure more likely to promote conciliation and unanimity than another, it is this very measure. But if the British minister wished for discord and strife, he could not find a better receipt to effect it than encouraging old prejudices. So long indeed as the present Protestant system was to be maintained, and the Catholic was rendered hopeless of enjoying the benefits of the constitution, it was easy for a minister to promote disunion; but when he takes the certain method of conciliating and uniting his Majesty's Protestant and Roman Catholic subjects in the common benefits and common interests of the constitution—the charge of promoting discord becomes ridiculous.

Mr. PONSONBY. Having on a former night spoken my sentiments so fully on this subject, I should not say a word now but for some strong allusions to my arguments, which have fallen from some learned and honourable gentlemen on the other side of the House. As to what has been said by a learned gentleman [Dr. Duigenan] about the conduct of the English Catholics, in first proposing and afterwards refusing to take a particular oath of allegiance, I do not know how the fact is; but I suppose, from his usual accuracy, he is founded in the assertion. But is it fair to argue from the acts of any body of men in another country, that we are to act with rigour towards three-fourths of the people in this? The Catholics of this country have already given, and do still offer, the strongest and most sacred pledges of their loyalty and attachment to the government and constitution; and for my own part, I do most firmly believe they are incapable of the baseness of deceiving their king, or their Protestant fellow-subjects. The learned gentleman has charged me with saying, I would rather be the slave of the Irish Catholic than the defendant of a British minister: I used no such word as slave; I did say then, and I now say publicly, I would rather submit to the superior state of any body of Irishmen, than be subservient to the power of a British minister, or become the dupe of those men who would seek to support British superiority in this country, by dividing its inhabitants in adverse parties, and governing one through the medium of the other. It is to this conduct, Sir, I expressed my abhorrence; and it is on this account I wished to convince the Irish Catholic, that it was not to the generosity of an English minister, but to an Irish Protestant Parliament, he was to seek for favour, or repose confidence; and it was therefore, I wished to reject this bill *in toto*, as the measure of a British minister, and that the Parliament of Ireland should vindicate its own honour, and its own justice, by admitting the loyalty of the Catholics of Ireland to a full and equal share in the constitution of the country. It has been denied that the British minister sought by this bill to have new divisions among the people of Ireland, instead of conciliation. But the contrary is obvious. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has ever been considered as a cabinet minister of England—I do not know whether my Lord Westmorland is to be considered in that light. Through the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland it is that the British cabinet must be supposed to attain their knowledge of the state of this country. The declarations of a right honourable gentleman opposite me in the last sessions of Parliament, and the activity of gentlemen under the influence of Government throughout the country in the course of the last summer, spoke it as the determination of Government, that the Catholics were not to be granted the franchise. But what opinion is to be formed of the intention of that cabinet—when the minister in this country never once intimated the smallest inten-

tion of ceding the franchise to the Catholics—never once consulted the Protestant gentlemen of the country upon the subject until it was intimated in the speech from the throne, and followed up by the bill of the minister now before the House? When therefore it was seen that the servants of Government first exerted every means to excite the Protestant counties and corporations, to resist the claims of the Catholics; and that the police party in the corporation of Dublin, were urged to set the example to the whole kingdom, by their manifesto for Protestant ascendancy; and then the cabinet minister of England declares from the throne a contrary principle; and the friends of the minister in this House, are now the loudest to declare that body of people fit objects for parliamentary indulgence, whom in the last session of Parliament, in the course of the summer, through the country they had denounced as men inimical to the constitution, and unfit for Protestant confidence. What other conclusion can be deduced from this, but that the division of the people was the object of the British minister, who while he was using his influence with the Protestants in public to resist the Catholic claims, was telling the Catholics in private, that it was not to the generosity of a Protestant parliament he had any thing to hope, but that any favour he had to expect he must hope only through the influence of the minister in this House? Therefore it is in order to prevent in future such things, and to cut up by the roots all the powers and all the stratagems of the British minister for dividing the people of this country. I called upon the magnanimity of the Protestant parliament of Ireland, to give the Catholic every thing it had to give with liberality and confidence—to admit them to a full participation in the rights of the constitution, and thus to bind their gratitude and their attachments to their Protestant fellow-subjects, and teach them to contemplate their redemption in the influence of any English minister.

Mr. HOBART. Sir, the honourable member has so particularly alluded to me, that I feel myself called again to trespass on the attention of the House. Sir, with respect to the motives which induced the introduction of this bill, the honourable gentleman has taken much pains to animadvert upon the conduct of Administration, but his animadversions are unfounded. He has accused them of dictating to gentlemen. Sir, there are many gentlemen of high character who have voted on this question, who would despise any attempt of ministers to dictate to them; men, Sir, who are above such ideas. The honourable gentleman talks of men influenced by Administration to sign the resolutions of grand juries against this measure, and yet they have since, under the same influence, voted for it. Sir, many of the honourable gentleman's own friends have done the same thing, who I am sure he will not suspect of influence, and of whom I have too high an

opinion to suppose they would act on this occasion in a manner they did not think right.

With respect to the conduct of Administration, which the honourable gentleman accused of privately treating with the Catholics, while they publicly spirited the Protestant grand-juries to oppose their claims, the charge is equally unfounded; but while he brings such charges against us, he has himself a conduct not less extraordinary, in the fastidious reserve with which he one day with-holds himself from all communication whatever with the Catholics, and the next he is all extravagant profusion in the indulgences he would grant them.

As to the arguments that have been thrown out of the difficulties which will arise from a great increase of the numbers to poll at elections, I do confess I feel some difficulty on the subject; but I know there are abilities in this House competent to remove the difficulty, and it may easily be effected in some future election bill. But surely, Sir, so great an object as the restoration of elective franchise to the Catholic body of Ireland, should not be rejected for a mere octennial inconvenience.

Mr. BLAKE (of Ardfry) opposed the amendment, because it went to defeat the objects of the bill, which was to conciliate the Roman Catholics.

The Honourable Mr. MAXWELL held this bill altogether the most rash, impolitic and inconsistent measure ever proposed in Parliament; it went to deprive the Protestant of his rights without satisfying the Catholic: by it would be accomplished the destruction of that Protestant ascendancy which he was sorry to see turned to ridicule in that House, even by those who had last year supported it with so much zeal and energy: it would deprive us of the sound part of the constitution, and leave us to the ridiculous expedient of entrenching behind the rotten part. It gave to the Roman Catholic a weight of power in the state, which as men governed by the common passions, and ambitious of human nature, they would not fail of converting to their own aggrandizement and to the erection of a Roman Catholic ascendancy on the ruins of the Protestant. It had been said, that the Protestant mind on this subject had greatly changed since the last session. He was ready to admit that the minds of Protestant Dissenters, and men of republican principles had changed, because it answered their views; but he was sure the minds of the Protestants of the church of Ireland had not changed; on the contrary, he sincerely believed they viewed the proceedings of the House in this business in the silent agony of despair, and did most ardently deprecate a measure brought into that House contrary to their consent, at the omnipotent fiat of a British minister, who by this bill affected to say, he would raze the penal code with the ground,



and out of its ruins erect a barrier for the defence of his influence in this country. The bill shewed the Protestant he was betrayed, and the Catholic he was not trusted: and thus it kept up that principle of division in this country which it had always been the policy of English ministers to support. He reprov'd the vanity of both sides of the House in bidding against each other for Catholic favour, and he was confident the Catholic would more highly respect their old and steady friends who yielded with caution to their claims, than those who oppos'd them on all former occasions, and were now for rashly granting every thing to their passions, without any circumspection or regard to consequences. He accused the framers of the bill with betraying the Protestants of Ireland, and he regretted the misfortune of Ireland, that those who had most sway in the government had no stake in the country—that having no property in the state-vessel, they might, when they chose, abandon the helm, and leave the unfortunate crew to the mercy of the storm.

Mr. STEWART objected to the clause (that granting the franchise), because he thought it was neither safe to the constitution, nor calculated to promote union. The clause went to create such a number of freeholders as would make the electors of some counties 100,000. It would, in such a case, be nearly impossible to hold county elections at all. The concession would not satisfy the Catholics, because it did not give them, at the present, any considerable share of political power, though it gave them, what, at a future day, when a reform should take place, would enable them to attain whatever else they might think proper. The bill gave to the Catholics the majority of the constituency of the kingdom; consistently, therefore, the whole superstructure of the government should be made Catholic; if not, there would be the absurdity of a Protestant superstructure standing on a Catholic base.

He lamented the religious dissensions that existed in this country, numbers being all at one side, and every quality for good government on the other.

He stated two reasons on which the exclusion of a body of men from political power may be justified, first, when it would be inconsistent with the established government, they should have the power;—second, when there were two contending parties. As to the first, the Catholics, he thought, were not, could not be friendly to a Protestant church establishment, which he considered as one of the chief props of the throne. He differed from Major Hobart on the safety of these concessions, so long as we should have a Protestant king; for what power could the crown possess, if the legislative assembly should be Catholics, and have a power of refusing the supplies.

The second reason, also, he conceived strongly to apply to the Catholics; for the struggle was now between them and the Protestants for political power. Let only the apple of contention be thrown between them, and a contest will be excited which could never have existence if the power remained vested in one party.

A confusion of the ideas of political and of civil rights had been very common throughout the discussion of this bill—civil rights the Catholics were in possession of, and political rights cannot be the peculiar possession of any—he exemplified England, in which there were nine millions of Protestants and yet only about 150,000, had votes—their political power was confined to few, and thus it might always be exerted with better effect,

Mr. D. LATOUCHE. Sir, I have sat here now above thirty years, as independent a man as any that sits in any house of parliament.—I belong not to Administration, nor never shall; I belong not to opposition, nor never shall: I vote with both, when I think they are acting for the public good, and I vote against both when they are not doing so. I sit here under the controul alone, of perhaps a very weak and erroneous understanding; but I will affirm a well intentioned and upright one. This I have always considered to be doing my duty, as an honest member of parliament, and as an honest man—and whilst I do so, I as little fear three million of men making a demand, which I am determined to resist, as I should the most contemptible individual, who might have dared to throw out an intimidation. Sir, I have lived my whole life long in habits of intercourse and friendship with Roman Catholics of Ireland, and whenever I have been fortunate enough to have had an opportunity of serving them, I never made a distinction between Roman Catholic and Protestant. I possess some valuable interests in the city and county of Dublin, and in two other counties of Ireland, where I found a large Roman Catholic tenantry; I have never disturbed a man of them. I have voted for every relaxation of the popery laws, and for every benefit conferred upon the Roman Catholics of Ireland, since ever I have had a seat in this House; and if any thing still remains to be done, necessary for their comfort and happiness, I am ready to give my feeble support to it; but, Sir, I here declare, that whenever they bring forward any measure, that may possibly tend to trench upon the Protestant ascendancy and our happy constitution in church and state, I shall resist it; particularly, I do say, that I shall not vote for an unqualified elective franchise to be granted to the Roman Catholics; nor for their having a seat in this House, because I think that would not only tend to subvert, but would actually be subversive, of both our religion and our laws. Sir, I have watched with heart-felt satisfaction, the rising prosperity of this country, and the more so, as I saw the

Roman Catholic walking hand in hand with the Protestant in that prosperity ; but sorry am I now to find that the conduct of misled and mistaken men has interrupted that prosperity ; for, Sir, the interruption of prosperity is hazarding, if not endangering, its loss. Sir, I well know, and I assert it as a fact, that those dangerous doctrines of reformation and innovation, so carefully disseminated through this country, for this some time past, by a certain description of—speculative men, have most materially injured both the landed and commercial interests of Ireland. Sir, they have given a very deep wound indeed to the credit of this country ; and I am persuaded, that unless something be done to put a stop to their progress, they will be attended with serious and manifold mischiefs to Ireland. I shall trespass no further on your patience, nor on that of the House, but shall now sit down, only reserving to myself a liberty of reply, should I think myself called upon ; and for the present shall only say, that I have never heard, neither within or without those walls a single argument that shews me the necessity of this measure.

The SPEAKER said, when a bill is introduced into this House for changing the constitution under which we have lived in happiness and prosperity, and under which we have seen this kingdom gradually rise to a state of affluence, and to an extent of trade and manufacture, of freedom and independence, beyond the most sanguine expectation of its warmest advocates ; when this change has been suggested to this kingdom from abroad, without any internal cause requiring its introduction, at a time of the most perfect content and unanimity, religious animosities at rest, and every man contributing his industry and exertions to the public weal—little as he was in the habit of speaking, he could not forbear to request the indulgence of the House while he should deliver his sentiments on so great a subject. However, before he entered into it, he would notice some of the transactions of last summer ; this he wished to have avoided, but the manner in which the conduct of grand-juries had been mentioned, by two or three gentlemen in that House, made it absolutely necessary for him, and he would say their conduct had not only been proper, but necessary and perfectly constitutional.

Soon after the rising of Parliament, last year, and after this House had almost unanimously rejected the petition of the Catholics, for granting a qualified franchise, a letter, signed Edward Byrne, had been circulated with a very suspicious secrecy, but was however publicly known before the summer assizes. This letter was full of sedition ; he thought so from the moment he first saw it, and he thought so still. It told the Catholics they were slaves ; there can be no slaves, if there be no tyrants. To whom did it mean that they were slaves ? To the Protestants, who were then pointed out to them as tyrants and oppressors : an insinua-

tion so notoriously false, that but for the remainder of the letter it might have passed unnoticed. It next endeavoured to poison the Catholic mind against the Protestant, by asserting that Roman Catholic tenants were turned out of their lands to beggary, to make room for Protestant freeholders. He now spoke in the hearing of the greatest part of the landed property in the kingdom, and he appealed to their knowledge whether such assertion was founded in fact, in any part of Ireland. It was not; and he would answer for the county in which he lived, and which he had the honour of representing, that no man in it made any distinction among his tenants for religious opinions, nor did he ever hear or believe, that any one Catholic was ever turned out of his farm to make room for a Protestant. The letter, with a view to further inflammation, tells them, they are not secure of an impartial administration of justice; thereby suggesting, that both grand and petty juries were so bigotted, so forgetful of their oaths, and magistrates so corrupt, that no impartial justice could be expected from them, and that a change of the law was essential to their protection. For what purpose was a statement so notoriously false made to the public, but to mislead and inflame the Papists; to rouse their discontent against the Protestants, and fire their passions to support a parliament of their own; which it was the great object of the letter to convene, and to convene in a manner the most obnoxious, after the French model and on French principles: a convention which was to pass by the Parliament; to pass by the Government, and transmit a petition to the throne, by deputies of their own; as if they would say to his Majesty, 'you can put no confidence in your Parliament, nor in your Irish Government, they have acted wrong; we only can tell you the wishes of the nation; we are the proper judges of what ought to be the constitution.' Some gentlemen had asserted the legality of their convention; he pretended not to much skill in law or knowledge of the constitution, but he challenged the boldest lawyer to meet him on that ground. He asserted it before them all, to be an illegal meeting. It is true he had seen opinions to the contrary, one of them given by a gentleman for whom he had the highest respect, as a lawyer and a man, but the case was not fully stated, nor were the answers fully made to the queries. He would not say that the Catholics, or any subjects, had not a right to meet and to form petitions by committees or deputies to his Majesty, or either House of Parliament. He agreed to it in the fullest extent, but this was not the plan of the convention; it was not to be assembled for one particular object, but to be a permanent body, to watch over the interests of a class of his Majesty's subjects. In that respect it partook of the nature of parliament; it took upon itself the duties of parliament, and could not be justified in a country where Parliament formed part of the constitution. That it

embraced more objects than one is evident, for the attendance of its members was expressly stated, not to be required except on important occasions.

He would add in defence of the grand juries, that by a British law passed at the restoration, no petition for a change in the constitution shall be signed by more than a certain number, unless previously approved by the majority of the grand jury, so that grand juries have been there deemed proper bodies to consider of such petitions; and what is the declared constitution in Great Britain, cannot be deemed unconstitutional or improper here. The grand juries were then called on constitutionally to notice the letter, and even as country gentlemen, they had a right, and did feel it their duty to repel its seditious slander, and to support the sense of this House, which Mr. Edward Byrne endeavoured by a counter-convention to overturn. For this conduct they have been represented as impeaching all the Catholics of Ireland. They animadverted on Mr. Byrne's letter only; and I believe they all did, I know the grand jury of Louth did, distinguish between him and the Catholics at large, whose loyalty and good sense they expressly relied on for disappointing the seditious views of that letter; and here, as no man wished more than he did to avoid personal reflection, and as he had mentioned Mr. Edward Byrne, he felt it a justice to declare that he knew him personally to be a man of worth; that if any of the laws he had ever introduced were serviceable to the trade of this kingdom, he was much indebted for them to the clear and sound information he received from that gentleman: he believed him a most sincere friend to the prosperity of Ireland; but when he acted as a political man, as a minister for others, he must still say, he thought him a bad politician, and must totally condemn his conduct.

Having thus vindicated the grand juries, he returned to the question before the committee, which was the clause for granting the elective franchise to the Catholics; this they demanded as a right, and many gentlemen in the course of debate had talked of it, as a restitution of a right, not a favour. If it were a right, all debate on its policy must be needless, for we could not withhold it. He would therefore consider it in that view, and he trusted he should convince them it could not be claimed as a right.

Persons who call it a right, do not distinguish between the real right of the subject and this assumed right. Every subject has a right to be bound only by those laws, and to pay only those taxes which are agreed to by the representative body of the people; that body is the representative of electors and non-electors equally; but the mode in which that representative body shall be appointed, and who shall share in that appointment, has ever been regulated, ascertained and restrained by law. There is an

absurdity in supposing that every individual has a right to elect; if so, it extends equally to all; it was prior to all law, and the whole practice of the British constitution has been an usurpation.

An act of Henry VI. limited the right of freeholders voting to such as had forty shillings a year. If an inherent right existed, the legislature could not have so modified and narrowed it; but they did so, and the law has been acquiesced in for centuries in both kingdoms. If it was not a common right then, it certainly cannot become so now. The registry act he mentioned also, as an instance whereby freeholders under ten pounds, were excluded from voting, unless they performed certain conditions; and he dwelt much on the law which totally prevents the exercise of the franchise, at the time when it is most desirable and can be of most use—at the time when a vacancy takes place, with momentous subjects before Parliament, and when individuals might wish to have a share in the choice. The law would not allow any man, at such time, to procure a power of voting, for he must be a possessor six months before the vacancy; it even prevents his voting, unless he swears that he did not procure his vote on purpose to qualify him to vote at that election.

Another instance of restraint is in the exclusion of revenue officers in England from voting, men who could not be excluded, if their right was inherent, paramount to parliament, and whom it seems hard to deprive of a franchise, for devoting their time and their health to the service of the public. But if the right was inherent, why is the female part of the community excluded, they constitute one-half of the people; the unmarried part of them cannot be supposed under influence, and they possess as good sense and understanding as we do. The constitutional ground, on which all these regulations proceed, is that the law restrains all those who ought in reason to be deemed unfit to vote, either from want of sound discretion, as idiots and minors, or from being supposed subject to the influence of others, as almsmen, freeholders under forty shillings, and revenue officers, or from not giving those tests of attachment to the constitution, which the laws deem necessary for the safety of the state, before any persons should be admitted into its functions; as Roman Catholics, who do not acknowledge the king to be the head of the church. In England the Catholics are not, he allowed, deprived of this right by name, but by implication; by prescribing, as necessary qualifications, the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, that no man might have political power, who was not attached to the constitution, both in church and state, and who did not acknowledge his Majesty to be supreme in spiritual as well as civil jurisdiction.

It had been asserted and relied on that the Catholics had exercised the right of franchise until the first of George the Second.

This was not the fact, for by every research he could make, they never exercised it since the Revolution, and he would prove it from the Journals which gave the best evidence of the practice and the usage of Parliament.

He read the resolution of the House in 1697, declaring *nem. con.* that Papists ought to be excluded from the right of voting: he then stated, that in 1729 their right came in question, on the petition of Mr. Cusse, for Irishtown; the proceedings on which were reported specially; and the case was that thirty-six Papists had offered for Mr. Cusse, and if they were admitted, he was duly elected.

The portrieve alledged, that he refused them, having been informed that they had been before refused at Ross, and had not voted for many years. One evidence produced by the petitioner believes, Papists voted formerly, but not of late time. Another says, Papists have been excluded from voting since James's time; and the sitting member's counsel insist, that the Papists had not a right to vote, and had not voted since the Revolution. No evidence whatsoever is produced to shew that they had ever voted; which, it must be supposed, would have been done if the fact were so. A debate ensued in the committee whether Papists had votes or not, and they resolved, the sitting member was duly elected, thereby declaring Papists had no votes. Those records clearly shew the usage from the Revolution, and there is not any other entry on the Journals which respects the subject, or which shews they ever had been allowed to vote.

The preamble of the second of Anne, shews clearly the intent of the legislature was to exclude them, "and for preventing Papists having it in their power to breed dissensions among Protestants, by voting at elections of members of Parliament, &c." Even the act of George the Second, which they say was the first that excluded them, says in its preamble "and for the better preventing Papists from voting, &c." as if it were a known fact that they were before excluded, but some further regulation was necessary to enforce it. All these authorities justified his assertion, that they did not exercise the franchise since the revolution, and prove the point as fully as any negative can be proved, particularly when it is considered that a resolution of the House of Commons, in those days, directed all matters of election.

He recurred back to two instances he had omitted—copyholders and lessees for years; the former constitute a great body of the landholders of England, and the tenure is in fact perpetual; but by very little better than a fiction they are excluded, upon the idea, that nominally they hold at will. Lessees for years are a numerous class, and there seems a great stretch of speculative reasoning, to say that a man possessed of land for 999 years, is not as independent a voter, as he whose interest depends on a decayed life; almost all the bishops land, and much corporation

lands can produce no voters on the same principle, being all demised for years. Some gentlemen had said that copyholders and tenants for years may acquire freeholds in other places, but the Papist cannot exercise the franchise without changing his religious tenets. If this argument has weight, it is still stronger in favour of women; the Papist incapacitates himself by adopting the tenets which disable him, but women, while the restraint continues, are incapacitated by the act of God; the one may by conformity acquire the right; the other's incapacity is physically irremovable; the argument therefore of those gentlemen, undoes itself by asserting too much.

Having thus cleared the question of right out of the way, and shewn that the Catholics could not demand this franchise as a right, the committee was at liberty to discuss, whether it be politic or not to grant it to them as a favour.

In every thing which had hitherto been granted to them, he had concurred. He would allow them property, with equal security for that property; civil liberty, with equal security for that civil liberty, and every thing which could tend to their ease, their happiness and personal welfare; but he would draw a line round the constitution, within which he would not admit them, while their principles were, he would not say, hostile, but certainly not as friendly to the constitution as those of Protestants. It was impossible while church and state were so intimately connected, that Roman Catholics avowedly averse to the one, could be as friendly to the other, or attached to a constitution founded on both, and one principle whereof was the inseparable union of both. He would say that the plain, natural and inevitable consequence of admitting them within the pale of the constitution, would be the destruction of the church establishment; and he would demonstrate this conclusion step by step, in a train of argument which appeared to him unanswerable.

It is vain to imagine that admission to the elective franchise, does not draw with it the right of representation; it will follow whether you chuse it or not, for upon what ground can you say men are fit to be electors and unfit to be elected. It had been urged, indeed, that a different qualification was necessary, and that it was so in England, and probably would be soon so here; but admitting it even to be so, it made no difference in the argument, for the qualifications of both were of the same nature, differing only in the amount of the value, and not in any consideration arising from their opinions, political attachment, or personal endowment.

If then by admitting them to be electors, you must allow them the right of being elected; and so give them seats in this House; upon what principle can you give them a seat in the one House, and refuse it to them in the other? Upon no one principle of common sense. And thus you give them possession of a full par-

ticipation in the legislature. The next step to the offices of civil and military power inevitably follows. You cannot say, that men whom you allow to be qualified for legislation, are unfit to be trusted with the execution of those laws they join in forming. No—such a refusal would be absurd in speculation, and unjustifiable in practice. Admitted then to every trust and power in the state, legislative and executive, do you think they would not feel their clergy degraded, while they remained subordinate? Would they rest content, when there was no inequality between the Protestant and Catholic laity, that there should be a degrading and mortifying inequality between the Protestant and Catholic clergy? He was not arguing on wild metaphysical speculations; he argued from human nature, from the common workings of the feelings and passions of men; from what Protestants would do and had done, and what he himself would do, were he a Catholic, in the same situation. Catholics would never bear to see the clergy of the minority, which the Protestant would then be, exalted by dignities and supported in affluence and splendour, while theirs had neither honours nor maintenance; they could not be content to see the clergy, who administered to them the duties of their religion, sunk in poverty, while the clergy of a church, to whom they had long been obliged to contribute, without profiting by their labours, were enjoying all the benefits of a wealthy establishment; subordination to Protestant power, had alone hitherto induced men to pay tithe for the support of a clergy, whose spiritual assistance they rejected. Possessed of power they would deem it but justice, to give tithe of Catholic to Catholic; and we should be at their mercy, whether they would allow the Protestant minister to receive even the tithe of his Protestant parishoners; they would naturally say, we have long paid tithe to men who never could make us any return of service; we have maintained a clergy whose doctrines we cannot listen to; it is time for us to pay our own clergy, and they might go further, we will put our clergy in their places; they shall henceforward enjoy what they have long laboured for without reward, and we will establish our church on the ruins of the Protestant. Such would naturally be their language, and such the fate of the Protestant clergy, and the end of the Protestant church in Ireland; when the church is gone the state will soon follow; you cannot expect a Protestant state to subsist without a Protestant church. In possession of power, they must wish to make theirs the religion of the state, and what would stand in their way? Nothing but the king's coronation oath "to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel and the reformed religion, established by the law; to preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law, do or shall appertain to them."

While a monarch sits on the throne, who has taken this oath, their church can never gain the ascendancy; their object of course would be to have a sovereign who should not be bound by it.

I am persuaded their loyalty and gratitude to his present Majesty, even were he to live half a century longer, would prevent their making any such attempt during his reign; but surely it is natural to suppose they would take the first opportunity they could after, to obtain a monarch not barred by such an oath from accomplishing their wishes. That monarch could not be the British sovereign: Britain would not alter the coronation oath at their desire, and thus their interest, their wishes and their ambition, must lead them to look for another monarch, and thus would be effected a complete and total separation from Great Britain. These consequences flow so naturally from admitting this first inlet into the constitution, that he could not divest his mind of them. It was painful to him to feel their weight, and extremely unpleasant to him to mention them; he wished to avoid it; but a question of such moment could not be argued, without looking to all its consequences; he had never weighed any subject so much, he looked on it in every view, he wished to convince himself he was mistaken; he still wished it, and would from the bottom of his heart thank any man who would satisfy him he was in error, and remove his apprehensions; he had no dislike to the Catholics; he wished to see no danger in a measure so likely to be adopted; but the train of reasoning which he had laid before the House, exactly as it had offered itself to his mind, had worked so strong upon him, that his opinion remained unshaken. He was still more confirmed in it, by considering the circumstances of their clergy; their oath of ordination bound them not as our monarch was bound, merely to maintain, but to extend and promote (*pro posse*, he believed was the phrase) the interests of their church. And all history concurred in proving their zeal; they have sent missionaries to propagate their religion at great expense, trouble and hazard, to almost every part of the world; extension of its doctrines and its powers is the duty of its professors; their habits of life too urge them to it; they are bound to celibacy; strangers to all the comforts of domestic life, their passions find no resting place, their home had not the allurements of love and of content, to engage and occupy their mind. Human passions are ever alive; if love do not engage them, ambition will; the experience of ages shew us the ambition of the Romish clergy, and when that ambition is fired by a religious zeal, and by the certain consequence of great temporal emolument and dignity, who can say to what extent it may not go; their oath, their interest and their ambition, all concur in rousing them to exert every power, and watch every opportunity of effecting this change; and however unpleasant to advert to

circumstances, of which the authors seem to have repented, he cannot avoid, as it is so apposite to the argument, to notice how eagerly and how early their prelates shewed their ambition, by claiming their titles of archbishops and bishops, in their signatures to their petition the other day to this House, contrary to the existing laws; titles which they would not have presumed to have asserted, but from the influence of that ambitious zeal, which overbore their judgment. They foresaw their own ascendancy so strongly in the very first dawn of Catholic power, that they actually believed themselves in the possession of it.

But let it even be supposed that the overthrow of the Protestant establishment, the dethronement of the house of Hanover, and a total separation from Great Britain, were not to be the inevitable consequences of the measure in debate, need he say, that there was still another reason for refusing the franchise as proposed by the bill—that they themselves were not in a situation to receive it.

The utmost efforts of the election laws had been hardly sufficient to prevent perjury and avoid tumult: both these species of mischief the admission of Catholics would produce. Nothing tended more to perjury than the want of knowledge of the nature of an oath; and their superiors had expressed their opinion as to the lower order of Catholics upon this point. In their petition to the throne (which by the way, he observed, was as imprudent a production as ever appeared from sensible men, but which, as not material to his argument, he should for the present forbear farther considering) they had stated that, “numbers of Catholics preferring perjury to famine, submitted to oaths which they utterly disbelieved.” What were these oaths which they utterly disbelieved? The oaths of allegiance and supremacy. Were these the men whose loyalty was so highly praised, and who were to be admitted into the legislature? and yet this is their character drawn by those who know them best. Would men who could, in the hour of coolness and reflection, take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy which they utterly disbelieved, hesitate in the heat and hurry of an election, to prefer bribery to perjury, and take oaths which were trifling, compared to those which they had before taken and disbelieved—oaths by which they might persuade themselves they were gaining advocates in Parliament for their religion? When their friends say, they think so lightly of an oath, as to prefer perjury to famine, can you doubt they would take false oaths, where the advancement of their religion was superadded to the avoidance of famine. He said, he spoke not of them from his own surmise or opinion; he stated the opinion which their own body gave to the throne, and published to the world. Here he could not help observing what ideas the petitioners themselves entertained of the constitu-

tion of Parliament; in the last session, this House had rejected the petition of the Catholics for qualified suffrage by an almost unanimous resolution; and how do these gentlemen act now? They do not come again to Parliament, and pray it to take their case into consideration. No; they pray his Majesty to use his influence with his Parliament; they apply to the British minister against the sense of this House, against the opinion expressed by every county almost in the kingdom, and do not scruple at endeavouring to procure an external influence upon this House. Are men, with such unconstitutional ideas, fit to vote or sit, or legislate for this country? They set forth in the said petition, that the elective franchise gives infinite variety of advantages in protection and otherwise, thus, intimating unwarily, that they consider it as proper to be applied to other uses, than the pure and uncorrupt choice of the fittest candidate; for what else do protection or advantage mean? Great stress has been laid on three millions, being excluded from franchise, and the petitioners desire that it may be recommended to Parliament, to consider their numbers. This is rather a blameable expression; it is too like a threat; but they forget to state, that of these three millions, one half are excluded as females; that of these three millions, 2,100,000 are so poor that they cannot contribute 4*d.* a year each to the exigencies of the state without oppression, if we are to believe the return before the House, and to argue from the reduction which his Majesty's officers recommend to him in the duties of hearth money, on the principle that there are so many subjects in this kingdom on whom it would be a grievance to continue a tax amounting to 4*d.* each: They forgot or rather omitted to tell his Majesty, when they represented their loyalty, that they were not, nor could they be, loyal to the same extent with his Protestants, who acknowledged his supremacy in the whole, and they acknowledged it only in half, in his civil, but denied it in his ecclesiastical jurisdiction. They should have said, at the same time, we claim your Majesty's favour to put us on an equality with the Protestants, but we do not, nor will we ever acknowledge you to have ecclesiastical or spiritual jurisdiction over us as they do. And here he remarked the strange situation the Protestants would be left in, if this bill passed. They were still to take the oath of supremacy, the Catholic was not; they whose principles were to acknowledge the King as supreme head, were to take a test, while those whose principles were the contrary, were to take none; the loyal Protestant is to take one oath more than the Catholic; it might operate as a temptation to conform to popery; for if among the number of subjects any should be found who might scruple to acknowledge any head of the church, they would be absolved from it, by professing themselves Catholics. It is also worthy of remark here, that revenue officers were deprived of the franchise in England, be-

cause they were supposed liable to the influence of their own British monarch; but Catholics are to be admitted to it here, who avow themselves, in all ecclesiastical concerns, to be under the direct influence of a foreign potentate, hostile to our church and our religion.

Having thus argued on the unsuitness of the inferior Catholics to exercise the elective franchise at present, without injuring the purity of election, he stated another danger to the constitution from this admission, that they must be advocates for the worst species of reform, that of individual voting, which every gentleman on every side of the House reprobated. The Protestant was superior in property, inferior in number; the Catholic the reverse; and the latter must be blind indeed to his own interest, if he did not endeavour to procure that reform which would give the influence to numbers and take it from property. But there is one consideration not yet adverted to; you are trustees for your constituents, they are Protestants, have you the power to destroy their rights, by overwhelming them without their consent: for his part he received his seat in this House, and the trust which he brought with it, from Protestants, under a Protestant king, a Protestant constitution, and a Protestant ascendancy, and, by the blessing of God, he never would give up their rights till they should desire him. Consult your constituents before you venture on such an act; will you give to the petitioners, for their three millions of men, a full participation of all that the one million enjoys, and not see that you are overpowering the rights of the one million? Gentleman talk of prohibiting forty shilling freeholders from voting; they will not attempt so wild a project, when they consider it. What! to disfranchise near two-thirds of all the Protestants—to disfranchise those persons who sent them into this House. The law in their favour had existed since Henry the Sixth, and now forms a principle of the constitution; did the gentlemen who lived in the north recollect that this would disfranchise all their manufacturers? One gentleman did, and supported their rights, he meant the member for Tyrone, [Mr. Stewart] whom he always heard with pleasure, for his principles were sound, and he was a true friend to the constitution. Did they wish to force manufacturers to look for ten pound freeholds; they would be spoiled as manufacturers, and be miserable farmers? The weaver, with his little piece of land and his garden, is generally a forty shilling freeholder, he is a useful member, a good voter and a good subject, and on such men as him, may the safety of the constitution often depend: he said, he had only one consideration to add to the arguments already offered, and this was from the present times and circumstances. The advocates for the bill relied on them much, and that it was necessary to give this franchise to make the Catholic a steady friend to the kingdom against the common enemy, who threatened our coasts with all the savage barbarities of French

cruelty; he had a much better opinion of them; he did believe them loyal to their king, and that they would not desert their country, or fail to support it, because the Parliament did not chuse, in the time of war and danger, suddenly to change laws which had subsisted for a century. If he could think of them in the bad light their friends represent them by that argument, he should say it was decisive against the bill, they were unmeriting of favour, and totally unfit to be trusted with any power whatever: conciliation is dwelt on as a motive, but will the bill conciliate? you gave them much last year for conciliation, did they thank you? No—they rose in their demands, and passed you by; it is not in the nature of any body of men, who look to full participation of power, to rest satisfied with a partial share; they never will be contented while any thing remains to be obtained. But what is the conciliation you wish for? Not to his Majesty—for their loyalty there you say is past all doubt; if it be conciliation to their Irish Protestant brethren, do you think they will feel themselves obliged to them as the authors of this grant? Will they receive it as a voluntary favour, moving from them? No—you know they did not originate it; you know it did not originate in this kingdom; there has been a race for the Catholic, and such of you as have entered the lists have been outrun.

My right honourable friend [Major Hobart] says, our relaxation last year justified Britain in interfering now, but our relaxation then went only to put the Catholic on equality with respect to property, protection and civil rights; this bill goes to a very different point, to give him political power; but does our rejection of the Catholic petition last year—do the resolves of all the counties in the kingdom, justify the interference? Gentlemen have thanked the Irish minister for this measure; he could not thank him for it, though he could for many others; for from his soul he considered it as the prelude and certain forerunner of the overthrow of the Protestant establishment in Ireland. The British minister was the first to rouse this question, and he was not well advised; the country was in peace, thriving in manufactures, industry and trade, public credit high and revenues ample; what is the case now, old animosities are revived; money, which was got then at three and a half per cent. for the public, cannot now be procured under five, if we may judge from the money bill; —trade is hurt, the revenues fallen, and industry destroyed by tumult in many parts of Ireland; this change has not arisen from French transactions; they have not been felt here, at least not till very lately; it arises from the fears and agitations into which this kingdom has been thrown, by the rousing and supporting this claim. But to return—if to conciliate be your object, this measure will not answer; three millions of Catholics are spoke of to be conciliated, but you forget the one million of Protestants; will you leave them contented by surrendering their rights

and their establishments? Will the manner in which the measure is begun and pressed forward conciliate them? No—we are in that awkward and unhappy situation, that we cannot obtain conciliation either by the passing or rejecting the bill; pass it—you do not fulfil the Catholic wish, and you alarm the Protestant; reject it—and the Catholic will complain of you.

Having gone through these arguments, he shortly recapitulated them: he said, I have shewn you that you are not bound to give franchise as a right, that you cannot grant it as a favour, without hazarding the overthrow of the Protestant church; the Hanover succession, and our connexion with Great Britain; that even if you could do it without such hazard, the mass of the Catholic body is unfit to exercise it with safety or advantage; that such a grant will make every Catholic an advocate for the worst species of reform, where numbers, and not property, are to influence; that if these arguments have no weight, still you are but trustees for your constituents, and cannot surrender their right without their especial leave, which you have not obtained. That if you had their leave, the times, the circumstances of intimidation, of resort to a British ministry and impracticability of conciliation, would all render the measure unwise in the extreme. And here he called on those who represent northern counties; you have heard the Protestant mind is changed there, but you cannot know it, for the fact is not so; the grand juries and respectable meetings have declared against the measure; some few small bodies, assembled without authority, give a contrary opinion. Do you believe even those few wish this grant from conviction of its policy? Very far otherwise, they want to gain the Catholic for the reform, to which they would now sacrifice every thing, and if you pass this bill, they will repent their folly, and say, you had neither the wisdom nor firmness that representatives ought to possess. He next called on those who had signed or sanctioned, by their presence at grand juries or county meetings, a disapprobation of this measure. What has happened since to change your mind? Not the imprudence and asperity of the Catholic proceedings; not the interference of the British ministry, in direct opposition to your own sentiments; not the threats of numbers, for you are above intimidation; but you are told the Protestant mind has changed. I allow prospect of war and fear of troubles at home may have operated on a few, and particularly in Dublin, where the want of discount and fall of stocks alarm some timid traders; but I cannot believe it is changed in the country, because, as far as I know or have heard, it is quite the reverse; if the newspapers be your authority, I answer, they propagate many falsehoods to carry this measure, and notoriously misrepresent the real sentiments and situation. If there be any in the House, who even entertain a doubt of the policy or safety of the measure, he said, that in wisdom, they must now vote

against it; it was of a nature that it never could be revoked, but they might at any time embrace it with equal effect, when those doubts should cease. He urged them all to postpone the bill till after the assizes, to consult their constituents in the mean time, and then they could proceed on secure grounds. He entreated the House earnestly to consider that no country was ever lost by firmness; many have been ruined by pusillanimity. Stand by the constitution; support it, and it will support you; you are strong enough to maintain it; shew that neither the British minister, nor any British power, shall ever make you change it. A constitution, to conclude in the words of as wise and firm a patriot as ever lived,

“ So dearly bought, the price of so much blood !

“ Oh ! never let it perish in your hands,

“ But piously transmit it to your children.”

In reply to Major Hobart—

He did not say the discussion of this measure was what injured this kingdom, it was the first stirring of it; and he differed from him from the first moment it was mentioned, because he saw it would destroy the Protestant establishment.

The discussion of it, after it was once stirred, became necessary, and so much was he of that opinion, that the right honourable gentleman must do him the justice to recollect, that when the subject of the Popery laws was stirred last session, he recommended a full and ample discussion then of every article of them; and finally, to tell the Catholics what we could relax, and what we could not relax, as the most manly and satisfactory mode of proceeding.

He never blamed the Irish Government, nor did he blame them now; they could not act otherwise; the measure began in Britain; but he should never cease to think it was extreme folly, or indiscretion in the British ministry, to rouse the question here. He would add, that much as he feared its fatal consequences, and much as he opposed it, yet, should it pass into a law, it would then be his duty, from that moment, to give up his own opinions, to embrace it as the law of the land, and do every thing that an individual could do to render it beneficial and effectual.

Colonel CONYNGHAM was decidedly against the admission of the forty shilling freeholders.

Colonel BLAQUIERE deprecated the present bill in *toto* , as finally destructive to Protestant interest, Protestant constitution, Protestant monarchy, and the connexion of this country with Great Britain.

Mr. VAUGHAN BROOKE was decidedly against the extent of franchise proposed by the bill, and declared that the House, by agreeing to such a measure, would sign the death-warrant of the constitution.

Mr. VANDELEUR spoke against the bill, and concluded by moving an amendment, "that ten pound be the qualification, instead of twenty pound per annum, and that the thousand pound personal property be left out."

Mr. BAGWELL was for limiting the franchise to ten pound freeholders. He had stood two contested elections for southern counties, and had experienced the disadvantages of a multiplicity of electors; and he was convinced no man could bear the expense of a canvas or a contest, if the forty shilling freeholders were to give franchise to the Roman Catholics.

Mr. OGLE said, he verily believed this was the last time he should open his lips in that House, but he would now once for all declare, that he thought the bill unconstitutional in principle, inadequate to the ends proposed, and dangerous on experiment; and therefore he considered it his duty, as the representative of a Protestant county, to oppose it with all the might he could, and to return inviolate into their hands the trust they had reposed in him. He now perceived however the bill was determined on, and therefore he considered the constitution subverted, and that House would ere long rue the proceedings of this day. You are now, said he, about to throw yourselves into the arms of a British minister, who will let you struggle among yourselves until you are quite exhausted, and then reduce your country to his perpetual power. I feel peculiar pain in this night taking my leave of this House, and the Protestant ascendancy in this country; that dear, dear old friend of mine, which I loved better than my life, and over which I now hang with grief as over the death-bed of an expiring parent; I now perceive it is fallen to rise no more; and I now declare to God, if this bill should pass into a law, if all the Roman Catholics and all the Protestants of this country were to elect me as their representative, I would never again set my foot within these walls.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE said, if he had had the misfortune of speaking sooner in the debate, the impression of what had been so eloquently and forcibly delivered by their Right Hon. Speaker, had made such an impression on his mind, as very much to stagger his opinion: having had time, however, to recover his senses, and coolly to revolve upon the situation of our affairs, he was decidedly of opinion the bill ought to pass. He admitted the critical state of the public mind, the unhappy alternative of the

impossibility of pleasing all; but of this he was convinced, there was no comparison in the choice, and that the granting to the Roman Catholics the franchise they desired, was the most likely means of establishing the happiness and tranquillity of the nation.

Mr. ALEXANDER regretted that he must now oppose a minority he had so long supported: he clearly foresaw, that to preserve a Protestant establishment in this country, a great and perpetual standing army would be actually necessary; and that it was only by the power of British fleets and armies, that British connexion with this country could henceforward be preserved.

The Hon. F. H. HUTCHINSON said, that in the former stages of this bill, the measure had been discussed with such extraordinary ability, that it would be unpardonable in him to trespass at any length upon the time of the committee.

That if the clause, which had been just read, should pass, unlimited and unfettered, by any subsequent proviso, they were then about to reject that fatal policy which had so long blasted our natural energies,—a policy whose original purpose was to convert or to exterminate, but the effect of which had been to divide the nation into two adverse sects,—to enslave one, and to weaken both.

He spoke of two periods—that which preceded, and that which followed the revolution. It was not his intention to travel back into the history of those times, he wished that their recollection was gone and lost for ever; and, he trusted, that the nation would accept that bill as the oblivious antidote.

He would assume it as an irresistible truth, that our national strength depended upon our union; this proposition was proved by natural deduction, by every page of our history, and by the misfortunes and disgrace which had overwhelmed the country.

He said, that the causes which originally gave occasion to the penal code, had long since ceased to operate;—the increased liberality of the mind of man, aided by the lapse of time, had disarmed the one, and put an end to the existence of the other. That there was now no Pretender to the Crown; the crime of disaffection was no more imputable, the source and object which created that passion being for ever removed.

That the terrors of Papal power continued no longer to agitate even the most feeble mind; that haughty and despotic authority which formerly gave law to sovereigns and their subjects, was now fallen, almost sunk from the human eye—vanished with the superstition which gave it birth.

The hostilities of reason had at last prevailed over spiritual tyranny, the decay and downfall of which every enlightened observer must have contemplated with peculiar satisfaction.

He said, that the popery laws were not only irreconcilable with the spirit of a free government, but that they had increased the very evils they were intended to remedy :—their first principle was religious conformity. That this endeavour to coerce the opinion of men, having been found vain and ineffectual, had long since been abandoned, as an absurd, and, he might call it, profane speculation. That the mind of man, free as the element in which he lives, will not be confined ; the body may be enchained, but the soul will expand itself, and, in despite of the vain efforts of human legislation, will assert its own native independence.

He said, that some objections, and these of a very serious nature, having been stated, he should, with the leave of the committee, consider how far they were founded, and endeavour to apply to them such answers as had occurred to his mind. That those who had opposed the measure, and he was happy to observe they were very few in number, had confined themselves principally to three grounds of argument, by which they sought to prove, that if the present bill should pass into a law, the probable consequence would be to unsettle the property of the kingdom, subvert the establishment of the church, and endanger the succession of the crown.

To the last of these positions, which had been urged with much zeal and pertinacity, he would in the first place apply his attention.

He said, the Catholics were as much interested to preserve the union of the crown of Ireland with that of England as we were ; they felt the benefits arising from that connection, they knew the strength of this country depended upon it, and on that strength is rested the security of their property as well as ours.

That he conceived this topic of objection conveyed against them an unjust and unwarrantable attack, which was refuted by their uniform loyalty for more than a century past, during two rebellions and five foreign wars ; that it stood answered and contradicted by our own experience, by the truth of history, and the language of our laws.

He next adverted to the apprehensions which had been expressed, of a repeal of the act of settlement, and reprobated, in strong terms, an assertion which had been made by an honourable and learned member [Doctor Duigenan] who had said, that the Catholics continued to settle upon the intermarriage of their children, those estates which had been forfeited in the reign of Charles the First. He said, that every man of the profession of the law had heard the learned member with astonishment and

shame. That one gentleman of great experience had risen to contradict him, and that no one person had been found, among the zealous advocates against the bill, even to insinuate an opinion that this statement was founded in truth.

He observed, that the wisdom of that policy which we had adopted in 1778, had operated as a confirmation of these acts. That since that period it is universally understood, the Catholics very generally derive under them, and that he believed no instance could be mentioned in which any one of that community had declined to purchase, because the estate had been forfeited. That these laws were now become our common title, strengthened and confirmed by the revolution of more than a century.

He trusted that the cry of danger upon this part of the subject, would not alarm any reasonable man, when it was considered that the claims which had been talked of, could probably be traced but in few instances, and had to force their way against the whole establishment of the property of the kingdom, against the strength of Ireland, and the united opposition of the whole empire.

With regard to those fears which had been expressed for the church, he begged leave to say, that no man who heard him was more desirous to preserve that establishment than he was; that he thought it ought to be maintained in all its property, its privileges, and its dignities, and although he never would subscribe to the doctrine, that the state did in any sort depend upon the church, yet he conceived it to be indispensably necessary that the church should be supported by the state.

That, perhaps, it might not be prudent to rest her interests in the grievances of her fellow-citizens, lest it should exasperate resentments, and thus prepare the seeds of misfortune at some future day. Much less was it judicious to endeavour to prove that her establishment was inconsistent with the security and the liberties of the great body of the people; that, for his part, he should most reluctantly be convinced, that the civil rights of far the larger part of the inhabitants of this country, were not justly compatible with our ecclesiastical policy. And he observed, that although in the French monarchy it had been a fundamental principle, that the state should be Catholic, yet the edict of Nantz, the repeal of which has been the source of so much disgrace and calamity to that unfortunate country, had given to the Protestants not only an ecclesiastical, but a complete civil establishment, and he was inclined to think that this repeal had, by exasperating resentments, contributed to the downfall of that church.

He said, he had thus endeavoured to prove that the principal arguments which had been urged against the bill, had no just weight, and that he was now come to a part of the subject, upon

which he entered with great concern, and which he would cautiously have avoided, if he had not been forced into the discussion by some extraordinary assertions which had been made in the course of the debate.

An honourable member [Dr. A. Brown] had thought proper to say, that the bill was the offspring of terror, and not of system, and that he considered it as a concession to armed petitioners.

It was a justice due to the Catholic body, to examine the truth of this position; and he had no doubt he should be able to shew, that it was a calumny as groundless and mischievous as ever was uttered within the walls of Parliament. It became necessary for him to bring to the recollection of the House, the circumstances under which the bill of the last year had passed, and those events which had taken place since the conclusion of the session. Gentlemen would recollect, that during the progress of that bill, the great body of the Catholics, acting by their committee, had presented a petition to Parliament—humble in its language, and constitutional in its import. This petition was received, but afterwards, contrary to the usual custom of Parliament, had been taken off the table, and rejected by a large majority;—that during the debate upon this question, the petitioners had been treated with some severity—and he remembered it had been particularly urged, that they were ignorant of the sentiments of the Catholic body, and had not spoken their opinions. He mentioned what had passed upon this occasion, not for the purpose of condemning that measure, of which he much disapproved, but to shew that it was the natural and necessary cause of those proceedings, which were afterwards taken by the Catholics—and that it would manifestly appear, that so far from having formed the presumptuous idea, of attempting to overawe the Parliament, which was the charge now made by the honourable member, that, on the contrary, every step they took was dictated by respect for the legislature—a regard to constitutional forms—and a solicitous desire to preserve, inviolate, the public tranquillity; that, as soon as the session closed, their first act was calculated to conciliate the affections of every Protestant in the community, by removing out of his mind those doubts and prejudices which had been conceived against them, upon the ground of their religious tenets; that to obtain this desirable end, they framed a declaration, consisting of nine articles, by which they disavowed all those opinions and doctrines inimical to good order and government, which had been attributed to persons of their persuasion; that this conduct did not, to his understanding, manifest any disposition to intimidate. That having done this deliberate and solemn act, they had, in the next place, proceeded to devise a plan, through the means of

which, the unequivocal sense of their whole body might be conveyed to the legislature; and that for this purpose delegates were elected by almost every town and county in the kingdom to meet, in order to frame a petition to Parliament, the principal object of which was, to obtain a restoration of the elective franchise, and an equal participation in the trial by jury. He confessed, that the appearance of this plan had created much alarm, but, as he conceived, without any reasonable foundation; that he had always considered it as perfectly constitutional, and had early, in the county in which he resided, acted upon that opinion—which was founded upon the rights of the subject to petition; a principle which ought ever to be regarded as sacred and inviolable. That he avowed his sentiments and conduct upon this occasion with great satisfaction, because he felt how fully vindicated they were by the inspection of the plan itself, and the manner in which it had been carried into execution.

He said, he would not state the resolutions of the different grand juries, or what had passed at the meetings of several of the counties in consequence of this plan; but would only remind the House, that their general tendency went to form a perpetual bar against the Catholic, to all his pleas, and all his expectations, and to exclude him for ever from the pale of the constitution. He said he did not lament those proceedings, because they had produced the scene in which the committee were then engaged;—the Catholics, firm in the pursuit of their object, had not yielded, even to the authoritative opinions of those very respectable bodies; too bold to be intimidated, and too proud to be coerced;—they became animated, not awed;—they sought protection at the foot of the throne, and had returned under the stamp of the royal recommendation, through whose wise and benevolent interposition we had now adopted their complaints.

He said, he had not intended to have gone into the detail of the circumstances which he had just stated; but he had thought it necessary to do so, to controul and correct the unjustifiable assertion, that we were yielding to armed petitioners; as he conceived the charge conveyed an insinuation contrary to the truth—of dangerous effect—and most derogatory to the honour of Parliament.

He had great satisfaction in observing, that the House was not deterred by the imaginary dangers, and the outcry which had been raised from doing an act of justice, and expiating the crimes of former legislatures. That the penal code, which that bill went to repeal, was altogether indefensible, upon any principle, either of moral justice or national wisdom. That, however, notwithstanding all its cruel and pernicious policy, it had found not only advocates, but panegyrists, from one of whom he had heard some very extraordinary doctrines, which, he was convinc-

ed, must have been received with indignation by every man who loved the country, who had any good affections in his heart, or any sense of public decency in his mind; some statements, he said, did not deserve to be refuted, and this of which he now spoke was of that number.

That his Majesty had been graciously pleased to recommend, at this most critical period, a conciliatory measure, for the purpose of uniting the affections of all descriptions of his subjects, against foreign and domestic enemies; that the man who had at such a moment interposed, with the zeal of a sanguinary bigot, to create animosity, to revive religious fanaticism, to excite the worst passions of the human mind, for the worst purposes, should be turned from with abhorrence, but ought not to be replied to. He who had been heard to villify with foul invective, the great body of the people; to impeach their loyalty, and with desperate effrontery to deny the sacred truths of the records of Parliament; to him it would not be either necessary or decorous to give an answer. Perhaps the old spirit of malignity and persecution was bound up in a single figure. He wished that the dark and horrid image was chained to one spot, as a spectacle for the common gaze, to exhibit in its hideous appearance the fall of bigotry, and the triumph of the people.

He said, he turned from this object with great satisfaction, to contemplate the humanity of the measure in which they were engaged, and to add a few words more in its support. That every part of the bill, into the particular provisions of which he did not think it necessary to enter, met with his entire approbation. That it was a proceeding of great wisdom, brought forward with peculiar propriety, to reward the loyal attachment of his Majesty's subjects, at a period when it was peculiarly necessary to animate their minds in defence of the monarchy, in support of the constitution.

It had been mentioned, that they were a party in the state; and many of the strongest arguments urged against them were founded upon this position. He said, we had made them a party by act of Parliament; that if we repealed our laws, and put an end to every disability for religious belief, they would continue a party no longer; we should at once break the spell by which we had bound them together, and dissipate those passions and prejudices, which had been related by the penal code. He concluded by saying, that in the restoration of liberty to the Catholics, we should find the security of the Protestant, and the energy of the nation.

Mr. GRATTAN. The authority of the right honorable member requires an answer. He states, that the internal situation of this country does not require any change in the penal law; he describes that internal situation to be the fall of stock, the stagna-

tion of public credit, and the impossibility of raising, on public security, a loan at less than five per cent. which before could have been obtained at three and a half; and the right honourable member adds, that this decline does not proceed from foreign contingencies, but domestic alarms; these alarms he explains to be an apprehension, lest the Roman Catholic should get the elective franchise. The fall of the funds took place in the month of November, long before any decision in favour of the claim of the Catholics, before the presenting their petition, and at a time when their chance appeared to be despaired of;—I refer to the chronicles of the time, and the recollection of every gentleman who hears me; it follows, that whatever might be the cause of the fall of the funds, it is not that cause which the right honourable gentleman has ascribed—the prospect of Catholic emancipation; but, on the contrary, it seems to be an opposite cause, —the despair of it. The conflict that might ensue from an obstinate bigotry on one side, and as obstinate a spirit of liberty on the other; and, from this event, we should collect something very different from what has occurred to the right honourable member, namely, that the Catholic body in Ireland are now too important and too wealthy to be excluded from the franchises of the constitution, without an immediate injury to the public credit; and that the internal situation of the country did require, and does require, a very material change in the laws which respect Roman Catholics. And if any further proof of it was necessary, if it was necessary to adduce any thing more to shew that the prospect of Catholic emancipation did not lower the funds, I ask, whether the rejection of this bill will raise them? whether the refusal to give the Catholics the elective franchise, and the other privileges of the bill, will raise bank stock, from its present depreciation, to 172? on the contrary, would it not depreciate stock, even below its present fall, if that then would be the case? I need not press the right honourable gentleman more on this part of his argument. He has been pleased to observe, that the Catholic cannot claim the franchise as matter of right;—it is of no consequence in what quality he claims it; that is an abstract question, unnecessary for your consideration, or this time;—the elective franchise, whether an inherent right, or otherwise, he claims as essential to his civil and political liberty; and in so doing, he has the authority of Protestant writers and Protestant proceedings. But the right honourable gentleman, so far from considering the elective franchise as an inherent right, tells you, the legislature has repeatedly governed and controuled that franchise; and he instances two particulars, the act of Henry VI. which confined the right of voting to freeholders, not having less than 40s. and the act of registry. I apprehend that these acts, and most of the acts that touch the elective franchise, election laws, among others, proceed on the principle

of regulating the right, but not of extinguishing it; and though, on some occasions, they have, in a degree, impaired it, yet the principle of those bills, like the bills of reform, was to render it, *bona fide*, and substantially, more efficacious; it was the reverse of extinguishment; from such laws we have, therefore, no right to infer any rule against the principle they profess, and in favour of the violence they may commit, by departing from their own principle; and I affirm that we cannot, from any authority of any respect, collect such a principle in the constitution, that would warrant any gentleman in asserting, that Parliament may, constitutionally, disfranchise a vast proportion of the electors of the kingdom. The right honourable member, to weaken the Catholic claims to the elective franchise, under colour of right, has told you, they had not such a privilege since the revolution; and he exposes the error of those who supposed they did not lose that right till the year 1746. The reasons he has given for entertaining that opinion I must be permitted to question. The first proof which the member adduces to shew the Roman Catholics lost the elective franchise immediately after the revolution, is not a law, but a resolution of the House of Commons, a resolution declaring the Roman Catholics had no right to vote. A House of Commons attempting, by its own resolution, to impose legal incapacities on its own constituents, only proves how little its sense was of law or constitution; but with respect to the legal right of franchise of the Catholics, proves nothing; they leave the law just where they found it. From this precedent nothing can be collected, except the lawless violence of a House of Commons against the legal right of the Catholics. The next proof adduced by the right honourable member to establish legal disability, is another resolution of the House of Commons, equally violent and equally lawless. It is a case in the year 1709, where they try the merits of a contested election, and resolve, that the candidate who had the minority of votes was duly elected, and the ground of this lawless decision was—that the majority on the election was composed of Papists. Here is another instance of an attempt in one branch of legislature to create legal disabilities, by its own arbitrary resolutions, a proceeding which forms the strongest presumption against the character of the times, and of that of the House of Commons, but done against the rights of Catholics; and both these instances prove the violence of the governing party against the Catholics, and that where the law fell short, they did not want arbitrary power, in the shape of resolutions, to extinguish and oppress them. It was in consequence of a train of such precedents as then quoted by the right honourable member; precedents wherein the House of Commons, instead of determining contested elections according to law, set up their own resolutions against law. That at last the general indignation of both coun-

tries, and the self-conviction of the House of Commons, inclined the latter to surrender to a jury on their oaths, a power which the House had so repeatedly abused. The right honourable member has endeavoured to support his position by much better authority than the resolution of one part of the legislature. To prove that the Catholics had lost the elective franchise before 1746, he alludes to the act of Anne, which imposes on the Catholic a qualification for voting, namely, the oaths of allegiance and abjuration. This act does not speak, that they had lost their franchise, but, the contrary, that they were in possession of it, and as it finds them in possession, so it leaves them, with this provision, that they shall swear allegiance to the King, and abjure the Pretender. And the Catholics having in numbers conformed to the requisites of this act, the 19th of the late King comes, and was the first act imposing legal disfranchisement. It has been adduced by the right honourable gentleman as otherwise, and represented as an act for the better effectuating disabilities before intended, from which I collect something very little to the credit of those times. I must collect, that those who formed the act of Anne, imposing the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, conceived that the Catholics would not take them, and so would be disqualified from voting at elections; but subsequent legislators finding the Roman Catholics took the oaths, proceeded to carry the intention into full effect, by an absolute and flat disqualification. Thus the circumstance which was an evidence of their loyalty, became a cause of their disqualification. I say, if the interpretation can be annexed to the preamble of the last mentioned act, which the right honourable member suggests, it remains for us to collect nothing less than I have stated, and something much stronger, against the moderation of the Protestants, than against the claims of the Catholics. The right honourable member has said, that were he forced to abandon the point of right, he can combat the Catholic claims on the ground of policy, and he informs you, that Catholics, if they obtain the elective franchise, will naturally advance, until at last they subvert the Protestant government in church and state, and finally separate this country from Great Britain; an opinion of so alarming a nature would require some argument, either in principle or precedent, to support it. The present has only the very high authority of the right honourable member; a very high authority certainly, which however in the present instance, I think, may be combated by general principles and particular cases. I apprehend the ground of the member's alarm to be a supposition, that no sect will be content with toleration, liberty, or power, but will hazard them all in order to establish its own church; or, in other words, will hazard liberty and property to pay tithe to its own clergy; that such might have been the folly of sects formerly, I might perhaps allow, but that it is now their folly, or

that it was ever their interest, I deny. Far from thinking with the great authority of the right honourable member, that a Protestant government and church is best secured by excluding from the franchises of the constitution three-fourths of your people, to whom you have already given the power of property; I think the best method of securing that state and that church, is to give the three-fourths an interest, not only in its settlement of property, but its liberty and its government; and as in 1778, you thought your own property strengthened by giving the Catholics the rights of purchase, so by the same principle should you now think your constitution strengthened by giving the Catholic the right of voting; in order to attach them to your act of settlement, you gave them an interest in your land, in order to attach them to your freedom, you must give them an interest in your constitution. Having given a common interest in the settlement of your property, and in your civil and political liberty, I cannot see the force of that apprehension which conceives they will hazard these interests for an object, which is not an interest but a charge, the payment of tithe to their own priesthood. I can conceive a sect exercising its power to promote its interest, but there is a point where interest ceases. The Catholics will use the power they get by property to obtain civil and political liberty, because that property is not secure, nor their condition free without it; but it does not follow, as the right honourable gentleman imagines, that the Catholics will also exercise the power they got by liberty to establish their church, because their property is as secure, and their civil and political freedom as complete without it; because the establishment of their church would be a charge, not an advantage, and is an object more of their superstition, than of their interest; superstition, which is transitory and now decayed; interest, which is uniform and immortal. The principles of action therefore in these cases are different, and therefore similar consequences cannot be drawn from them; but sure I am, if there is any danger to church and state, that there is much less danger when three-fourths of the inhabitants are separated from its church only, than when they are separated from the church and the constitution, when there is one motive only, and that a motive that every day weakens to detach them from the establishment, instead of every motive that usually, and now so peculiarly operate on the human mind. To the principle I advance, I presume to add instances what is the case of the Presbyterians, perhaps the majority of the Protestants, separated from your church, and incorporated in your constitution. Why have not they exercised political power to establish their church? Have they a better disposition to your hierarchy, or a greater interest in tithe than the Catholic? But there is another living instance to disprove the opinion of the right honourable member; it is the instance of Canada. He has carried his apprehension so far as to say, that the Roman Catholics

will at last subvert your church, and then separate from England. The Catholic religion is the religion of Canada, and has long been so; and yet Canada has not separated from England, and yet have not the people there more than those powers which you say would produce a separation. From this, and from the other instance, I venture, in contradiction to the high authority of the member, to suppose that the civil and political liberty of dissenters, whether Presbyterian or Catholic, is compatible with the safety of your church and state, and your connexion with Great Britain.

The right honourable member makes a further objection to this bill. He says, the Roman Catholics would, from their numbers, render elections tumultuary. I differ from those who think elections should not be popular; on the contrary, the expence, delay, and corruption attending elections, arises from the paucity of the electors, and would be, with a proper election law, prevented by their number. A small body of electors must ultimately become the monopoly of an individual, who will buy them; a great body cannot, because no individual can buy them. It should be property that elects; but property in the hands of the many, and not the few. However the right honourable member has administered a cure to the objection arising from their numbers, by stating that of the Catholics to be two million and one hundred thousand, who could not, on account of their poverty, be electors; it follows, from such a statement, that the Catholics to be admitted by this bill are less in population, as well as much less considerable in property, than the Protestants, and that the objection of the member is answered. From an objection thus answered by the member himself, the right honourable gentleman proceeds to another, and observes, that the Roman Catholics are not fit to exercise the elective franchise, from their present state of moral depravity. He grounds that belief on a paragraph in the committee's petition, which mentions that several of them have been induced, by the severity of the present exclusion, to commit perjury; but will the right honourable member, on such an evidence, going only to a particular instance in the case of some individuals, assume the moral depravity of the whole Catholic community, for the purpose of imposing on the whole of that body legal incapacities? Never could an individual, much less a vast body, in so summary a manner, be convicted of such an offence, to inflict such a punishment. But if such is the moral depravity of the majority of your countrymen, why suffer them to be evidences? Why not disqualify them from giving their testimony in a court of justice, as from giving their vote on the hustings? Do you think it safe to expose your lives and fortunes to be affected by their testimony as evidences, when you think your elections should not be affected by their votes, because they are not credible on oath? But it is plain that they do not deserve, nor you entertain

such an opinion of them. I come to another objection of the right honourable gentleman. The times—these, he says, are not times to give the Catholics the elective franchise; public credit has fallen; and he proposes to reject this bill. A war has taken place; and he proposes to exclude three-fourths of your people from the blessings of your constitution. Suppose a descent on this country by the French; do gentlemen imagine the Catholic will be more active in resisting them on account of their legal incapacities? The right honourable member has said, if the Catholics would avail themselves of the opportunity of the times by migrating, they are not safe objects of your confidence. I think they are; nor can I condemn any set of men who migrate in search of liberty abroad, instead of proscription at home; but, suppose they should not migrate, but remain, does the right honourable gentleman see no danger in the times; no danger lest good subjects should, under the operation of incapacities, and under the prevalence of the doctrines of the times, catch the poison, and, instead of continuing good monarchy's men, become republicans? Do not gentlemen know, that the enemy combats you not only with its arms, but its doctrine? That the bitterness of the Catholic religion is spent, and the rage of republican principles are advancing, and that if you exclude your fellow-subjects from the rights of the British constitution, they may, perhaps, be tempted to look to the rights of men? In such times I find a new argument for Catholic freedom, under the monarchical constitution; the right honourable member finds, in such times, a new argument for their disabilities. The right honourable member has been pleased to conclude a very able, but with deference to that great ability, may I be permitted to say, an erroneous argument; he has concluded with one great principle, adduced to combat this bill: the House of Commons are, says the member, trustees, and cannot prejudice the elective rights of those who send them to Parliament, or, at least, cannot prejudice those rights without the consent of their constituents; I must here deny, that the right of the Protestant constituents is prejudiced by this bill; on the contrary, I hope, I have shewn that those rights are strengthened by it; that, at present, the Protestant community does not, in any adequate or effectual manner, exercise the right of elections; that those rights have become the property of a few great patrons, and are, in a great measure, lost to the community, Protestant as well as Catholic; and that the only way of restoring them to that community is to give that community weight against the influence of the minister or the patron, by adding to its numbers a portion of its fellow-subjects.

But, waving the application, and admitting this principle of the right honourable member, which, properly understood, I do not, by any means, combat, “that the House of Commons are only trustees, and have no right to prejudice the elective fran-

chises of their constituents," it follows that the powers of Parliament, in governing and controlling the elective franchise, are much more limited than the right honourable gentleman, in the first part of his speech, seemed to conceive; it follows, that Parliament has no absolute authority over their franchises; it follows, that the law of George the Second, adduced by the member, which took away the elective franchise from the Catholic, and still more, the two resolutions of the House of Commons, affecting to disfranchise them without even the form of law; resolutions whose authority the right honourable member has also resorted to, were, according to his own principle as now advanced, so many breaches of trust. We are not to understand that the House of Commons was a trustee for the rights of its electors, provided they were Protestants. We are not to understand that the House of Commons has no right to prejudice the elective franchises of its constituents, by extending them, but that it has a right to prejudice the elective franchise of those constituents, by a total and entire extinction; the principle is equally applicable to the Catholic as the Protestant elector; and as the rights of the Roman Catholic elector come precisely within the principle now advanced by the member, as they were, without consulting him, and by his trustee, in breach of that trust, extinguished on a former occasion. The question now before you is, by the right honourable member, reduced to a small compass, whether you will set aside that act of violence, and fulfil that trust by an act of restitution—that is, by restoring to the Catholic the elective franchise.

Such were the principal points in the speech of a gentleman whose great abilities and great authority, even in error, cannot fail to make an impression. To the other honourable member, who has repeatedly traduced his Majesty's subjects, and among others myself, I shall only say that in most of his assertions he has wanted foundation; that the conduct of the Catholic since the revolution, and the opinion of the legislature thereon, refute him; that history, and the very history which he quotes, not far from the very page he cites, refutes him; for in Harris, his own author, whom he produced as his authority, to say that none of the Irish forces after the capitulation of Limerick joined King William; he will find that nineteen regiments of them went into the service of the English, and Harris gives their names. I must further observe, that the charges which the member has made against the aggregate meeting of the city of Dublin, are as void of foundation as all his other attacks; that the aggregate meeting was composed of a number of respectable citizens, who could stand in competition with the member who abuses them, both in credit and conditions, and, I have reason to think, spoke the sense of the city; and, I learn, that some of the most wealthy and respectable, who had before signed instructions against the grant of the franchise to Catholics, now approve of that measure.

Sir, as to myself, who have been alluded to in this and other debates on this subject, I shall say, that where my fellow citizens are the subject of attack, I do not decline to take my share of obloquy: situated and connected as I am with the fate and fame of my country, I must expect a personal attack, whenever she is made the subject either of invective or oppression; I will humbly endeavour to shield her against both.

The question being now put on Mr. VANDELEUR's amendment, it was negatived on a division.

For the amendment, 144—Against it, 72.

Another amendment was proposed by Mr. WARBURTON, to limit the franchise to five pound Catholic freeholders, which was also negatived; as was also Doctor DUIGENAN's amendment, without a division; and the clause passed in its original form.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved some other amendments, which were adopted; and at near five o'clock next morning the committee broke up, and obtained leave to sit again on Friday; to which day the House adjourned.

FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 1793.

The EARL OF HILLSBOROUGH presented a bill for confirming, amending and enlarging the powers vested in the corporation for carrying on the Newry navigation.

It was read a first time; as was also a bill presented by the SOLICITOR GENERAL, for explaining and amending the laws relative to the road from Roscrea to Limerick.

The House then, pursuant to order, sat in committee on the Roman Catholic bill.

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 1793.

The House severally resolved itself into a number of routine committees, in which no debates occurred. After which,

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD moved for leave to bring in a bill for the relief of the baking trade; which was granted.

The Newcastle and Limerick road bill was presented by Mr. PERY, and read a first time.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM, after an introductory speech of some length, in which he expressed his concern, that he must be absent from town when the question of reform would come before the House, yet to lay a foundation for that business, moved, "for a committee of the whole House to inspect the Journals of Parliament, and to report what innovations had been made from time to time in the borough representation, by any additions made to that part of the representative body."

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD seconded the motion.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE opposed the motion, and entered pretty much at large into the reasons why, in his opinion, the House ought to reject it; they were already encumbered with two separate proceedings on the subject, the bill and general committee, in which, according to the language of Parliament, they were reported to have made some progress, although every gentleman in his heart knew, they had made none at all. Yet not content with these two hares on foot, his right honourable friend was for starting another, although it was manifest to the world, they were sufficiently bewildered with their present chace. He stated that it was unusual, if not unparliamentary, to bring forward so momentous a measure without notice; a case replete with sufficient difficulty at any time; in the present moment, hazardous, if not fatal, to the peace of the kingdom. He spoke a great deal upon the happiness we might and had enjoyed, under the present constitution, and that with it he was satisfied, and did not wish to be better than well.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM withdrew his motion; which, he said, he should bring forward at a future day.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 1793.

The EARL OF HILLSBOROUGH presented a bill for amending and reducing into one act of Parliament, the laws relating to the militia in Ireland.

It was read a first time, and ordered to be printed.

The qualification extension bill was also read a first time.

The House then resolved itself into a committee of the whole House on the Roman Catholic bill.

The subject of the oath proposed by Doctor DUIGENAN was again revived; and an oath, so modified as to meet general approbation, was now brought forward.

Mr. HOBART said, that as conciliation was his great object; as he wished to grant real and solid benefits to the Roman Catholics, with the perfect consent and good will of the Protestants; and as many very respectable gentlemen had given their opinion that an oath not differing in a single *iota* from the declaration of the Roman Catholics, would tend greatly to conciliate the Protestant mind; he did not think it unreasonable to concur in their wishes; and therefore he would consent to the oath now proposed.

Mr. FORBES said, he thought the oath altogether ridiculous and unnecessary, and assured the committee, that when it came before the Attorney General and Solicitor General of England, it would be an object of laughter.

DoCTOR DUIGENAN.—I cannot exactly tell what will create a laugh in England.—Here, indeed, I know that “gentle dulness never loves a joke.” The House of Commons of Ireland is not, I hope, Sir, to be guided by the opinion of an English Attorney General. I thought by the repeal of Poynings’s Law the power of the English Attorney General was abolished.

The Roman Catholics, Sir, did not think the declaration ridiculous, or they would not have published it as the ground for Protestant confidence; they have been charged with holding tenets injurious to the social compact by which states subsist; the belief that this charge was true, has been one great reason for not entrusting them with power; in their declaration they deny the charge—I am glad they do. I believe them to be honest men; and therefore I desire they will swear to the words of their own declaration.

After a long conversation the oath was inserted in the bill.

The oath being thus, in its amended form, adopted,

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE moved an amendment at the end of the clause, for granting continually upon this oath the elective franchise, the words “any bye law in any corporation to the contrary notwithstanding;” which was agreed to, as was also the clause for allowing to the Roman Catholics professorships in medicine.

The Hon. Mr. ANNESLEY then rose and observed, that as Roman Catholics had long been versed in the experience of trade, he saw no reason why the revenue board should not be open for their admission. They had been refused seats in Parliament, and some gentlemen, fond of reform, wished to exclude revenue commissioners from sitting in Parliament; of course these were places exactly suited to the Roman Catholics. He therefore moved,

that the words "commissioners of revenue" be expunged from the prohibitory clause; which was put and carried.

He then moved, that the "under secretary of state" be expunged from the prohibitory clause.

Mr. GRATTAN objected to the enumeration of offices, as a prohibition of his Majesty's privilege of appointing to places within his nomination, such of his subjects as his Majesty should think competent.

Mr. HOBART said, the principle of the bill was not to admit Roman Catholics to the state; the bill was expressly framed on this principle, and therefore it was unnecessary for him to take up more of the time of the committee than barely to say, he must resist the motion.

Mr. GRATTAN replied; he differed much from this principle; and said he must be a visionary politician who could imagine that after what the bill granted to the Catholics, they could long be kept out of the state. If the right honourable gentleman lived a little longer in this country, he would perceive he had drawn a barrier that could not stand, for that it would be in vain to attempt keeping out of the offices of state the men who were admitted to the constitution.

The Hon. Mr. MAXWELL observed, that so long as the principle of exclusion should exist, he would wish to exclude the Roman Catholics from the places of keeper of records, register of deeds and his deputy, and the prothonotaries of the two courts. He made a motion to this purpose, which was negatived.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD moved, that the words "provost and fellows of Trinity College be expunged;" but this was negatived, on a division.

For the motion, 110.—Against it, 6.

The Hon. Mr. ANNESLEY moved, "that the place of postmaster general be opened for the Catholics;" which was also negatived.

Major DOYLE moved, "that they be admitted as high sheriffs of counties." This was opposed by Lord Hillsborough, on whose motion the office of high sheriff was also precluded them.

Mr. OSBORNE moved, "that they be admitted to the benefits of Protestant strangers in towns corporate, under the statute of Charles the Second;" which was also negatived; and the remaining clauses of the bill being gone through without any material amendment, the House adjourned.

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 1793,

This day the **SPEAKER**, on the motion of the elder **Mr. ROWLEY**, took the chair at half past four; and there not being members enough to form an House, **Mr. Rowley** pressed the question of adjournment.

Mr. BLAKE (of Ardfry) and **Mr. VANDELEUR**, urged that it was rather too severe to press such a question on a day when an interesting debate was expected, and an important bill (that for the relief of the Roman Catholics) to be reported, and at a period of the session when most material business remained to be done.

Mr. ROWLEY persisted—he said, that the House, only a few days since, had come to a specific regulation, that the question of adjournment should be put whenever the Chair was not attended at four o'clock; if, therefore, the regulation was not enforced, it was useless; but for the sake of example, he would now persist in his motion. The question of adjournment was then put by the Speaker, and carried.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 1793.

Mr. JOHN O'NEILL presented a petition signed by one hundred and thirty prisoners, confined in the marshalsea of the four-courts, on behalf of themselves and the rest of the poor debtors confined in the different gaols in Ireland; setting forth, that the petitioners as well as their families are in a most wretched and melancholy situation, many of them having almost nothing to eat, fuel for firing, or a bed to lie on; gaol allowance they have none; and if it was not for the bread some of them receive from the charitable society, they would absolutely be starved to death; lost to society and to their families, and forsaken by their friends, they linger out a wretched life, and the only hope they entertain of being extricated from their misery, is from the humanity of the legislature, or the friendly hand of death: the petitioners with great humility beg leave to observe, that the law as it now stands subjects an unfortunate debtor to an imprisonment, which is never inflicted on the most daring offender against the peace and good order of society; the perpetrators of crimes, to which the legislature has not in its wisdom annexed a specific penalty, are imprisoned, not at the arbitrary will or uncharitable malice of the prosecutor, but by the judges of the land, in their sound discretion, who feeling that they themselves are men, make every allowance

for the infirmities of their fellow-creatures; and the criminal may still appeal (and often appeals successfully) from the decree of the ministers of justice to the king (the inexhaustible fountain of mercy) for a remission of his sentence, but the poor unhappy debtor must be imprisoned at the will of his often merciless creditor; a will which though exercised to the oppression and utter ruin of the most miserable creatures on the face of the earth, neither law nor equity can check or controul; to the transcendant power of Parliament then do the petitioners raise their feeble voice, intreating their aid, with an humble confidence that misery, such as they endure, will not be deemed unworthy the attention of the House; they intreat that such a bill may be brought in as will be the means, as well of preventing the fraudulent debtor from cheating the fair creditor, as the cruel creditor from imprisoning for life, at his will, the poor unfortunate debtor; and such a bill the petitioners humbly conceive would be for the benefit of both creditor and debtor, but this and all other matters the petitioners, with due submission, leave to the wisdom and humanity of the House; and the several families depending on them, will receive with heart-felt delight and gratitude, such relief as the House shall think just and equitable.

It was ordered to lie on the table; and

Mr. HOLMES, in compliance with the wish of Mr. JOHN O'NEILL, in presenting the petition, moved leave to bring in a bill for the relief of insolvent debtors.—Leave granted, and a committee appointed to prepare it.

The report of the committee on the Catholic bill was presented by Mr. DAY.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE wished that the clause which had been introduced in the committee by way of proviso, preventing Roman Catholics from voting in vestries on questions relative to the demise or disposal of any parish property, should be withdrawn; it was a provision which gave no security to Protestant ascendancy, and prevented Catholics from interfering in the disposal of property, which in many instances belonged to the parish at large, and was bequeathed to lighten the parochial burdens of all the inhabitants.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY agreed in the idea.

Mr. DUIGENAN defended the proviso, and shewed the necessity of it, by relating an act of vestry which had been made some time ago in Catherine's parish; that parish had an estate of 250*l.* per annum. At a vestry, in which fifty-eight Catholics were present, and only fifteen Protestants, 60*l.* per annum, had been

voted by the Catholics out of this sum to persons called Roman Catholic curates, and that too in opposition to the sense of the Protestants who assisted at the vestry. The proviso, he observed, did not go to deprive the Catholics of their right to vote at vestries, if any such they had, but only to prevent the bill from being construed to give them this power.

He shewed, that if the Catholics were permitted to dispose of parish property in this manner to themselves, they would in fact be permitted to tax the Protestant inhabitants; for, in proportion as the fund appointed for defraying the parish expences, was appropriated to other purposes, the parish cess must be encreased.

The amendment was at length adopted, as were also all the other amendments.

The bill being gone through, Mr. ROWLEY declared himself a decided enemy to that clause of it, which gave to the Catholics the elective franchise. No man was more willing than he, that they should be indulged and protected, and he thought they were so; but the Protestant ascendancy ought to be preserved: the grant of the elective franchise tended to subvert that ascendancy. If the clause conferring that were struck out, he would support the rest of the bill; if not, he would oppose the whole bill on account of that. He concluded by moving, that this clause should be expunged; he was seconded by Mr. GEORGE OGLE; and on the question being put, the motion was negatived without a division.

The bill was then ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. HOBART read his Majesty's answer to the address of the House; which was ordered to be entered on the journals, and a committee appointed to prepare an address of thanks.

Mr. MAXWELL informed the House that Nicholas Ash had grossly prevaricated in his evidence before the committee, appointed to enquire into the manner in which the late lottery was drawn; the committee thought it necessary, however, to continue his examination on the morrow, as it was likely he knew the persons concerned in the fraud which had drawn the attention of the House; they would not wish, therefore, that he should be committed to Newgate, though his prevarication would justify that, but to the custody of the Serjeant at Arms for the night.

The PROVOST was against depriving a man of his liberty, unless on a formal report of the committee.

Mr. MAXWELL, therefore, reported the prevarication, as from the committee; and moved that Nicholas Ash be committed to the close custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH knew no instance where a man had been committed by the House, for the purpose of re-examination; imprisonment was always inflicted by the House as punishment for an offence.

The SPEAKER knew no reason why a witness might not be examined in custody as well as at liberty; there were many instances, he said, where witnesses had been committed for prevarication, and afterwards discharged on giving evidence properly.

The motion of Mr. MAXWELL was agreed to.

The PROVOST moved leave to bring in a bill for directing the application of certain sums of money, granted for providing and maintaining a botanic garden, and for appointing trustees to manage the same. Leave given.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH moved, that the militia bill be read a second time, agreeably to the order of the day.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY declared that he was not yet sufficiently acquainted with the bill to debate it. It had been ordered to be printed, but it was not yet delivered to gentlemen.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH observed, that the bill was now in a course of distribution. It was a bill of very great importance, and a novel one; he, therefore, hoped gentlemen would not unnecessarily impede it.

Mr. PONSONBY said, the noble lord would, if he considered for a moment, perceive that every reason he had urged was a strong one for not reading the bill now; it was now read in distribution; it was important and novel; therefore it ought not to be hurried through the House.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH wished to get the bill a step farther in its progress to-day, and then have it committed for to-morrow.

Mr. FORBES said, the bill was of such a nature that it could not be efficient, but from the concurrence of the country gentlemen; if it were hurried through a thin House, at a time when those gentlemen were absent at the assizes, it would not be likely to meet that concurrence; he was, therefore, of opinion, the bill should be read a second time to-morrow, and not committed till after the assizes.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH observed, that the raising of a militia was a tedious business, of at least two months, and the bill was only for a year; any errors that might exist in it, could be remedied in the bill of next year. The reason why he had not brought it forward sooner, was that some difficulties, he had not foreseen, had occurred, which were now removed; he persisted in his motion.

Mr. GRATTAN was decidedly against carrying the bill through till after the assizes. A militia bill had employed the wisdom of the English House of Commons for years, and was not yet rendered perfect. To pass such a bill in the Irish House of Commons, in four days, might make it an act of Parliament indeed, but not an act founded in wisdom. He hoped it would not be pressed; if it were, he would oppose it. He could not agree that it should be committed till gentlemen were returned from the assizes.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD was for having the bill read now, as gentlemen might oppose the Speaker's leaving the chair on the question for committal, if they should think proper to oppose it.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH was also for having it read.

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) requested the second reading might not be pressed at present. Nothing more was yet known of the bill than that it was a militia bill. He hoped one day at least would be given to consider it; thus to hurry it through the House would certainly give the public a very bad impression of the bill.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH withdrew his motion, and the bill was ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

A petition of masters of vessels, trading in coals, now in the port of Dublin, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that the petitioners are impelled by very pressing considerations to seek the protection of the House; they feel themselves hurt in their trade in various ways; they know their interest too well to keep their vessels from the quays, at an unavoidable great expence, when they have once arrived in port; yet how are they traduced in the public prints for entering into combinations or resolutions to hold back the coals; when they get to their births, they have hardly any free or open intercourse with the public; the cars are scarce or monopolized, they have not an opportunity of discharging their cargoes, their hatches are open, they wish to make dispatch; their individual interests are separate, and each master of

a vessel wishing to get home, has herein a sufficient inducement to sell at a reasonable price; the petitioners cannot compel the people to buy their coals, however moderate the terms; they cannot compel the carmen to give up their cars, if they even could, on the arrival of a fleet, the number of cars which ply is by no means sufficient to clear them in the limited time; the time appointed is eight days, in which time if they do not dispose of their cargo, however large the vessel, however short the days, however inclement the weather, or however large the fleet at market, they are fined forty shillings per day;—this is the particular grievance which they take the liberty of calling on the House to redress; they apprehend, and mention it with all respectful deference, that the act enforcing such a fine, is a law unprecedented in the regulations of the commerce of these countries, and its tendency is naturally and must necessarily be, to enhance the price of coals; for they must either meet the fines by raising the price, or else they must fly from them, by deserting this port. It may be contended that some coercive measures are necessary to oblige masters of vessels to dispose of their cargoes quickly; their answer is, it is quite contrary to their interest to lay up their vessel at a quay, and make cellars of them; at the certain loss of thirty, forty, and to one hundred pounds per month, in expences of victualling, wages and loss of time, for an uncertain prospect of profit in the advance of the price of the market, they would rather, if possible, get their cargoes out in one day, and get away the next; testimony can be given that the masters of vessels on whom the fines have been levied, had previously disposed of their cargoes, but when the buyers came to take them away, cars could not be procured, because of the monopoly or scarcity; while however the punishment thus falls irregularly and severely on individuals in the trade, they beg leave to prove to the legislature, by adverting to fact, that it ultimately falls on the public; coals were never at such a continued high price as since the act has been enforced: they rest their cause on the protection of the House, and hope for speedy relief in such manner as to their wisdom shall seem meet.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

A petition of Richard Griffith, Esq. Burges Camac, Esq. the Rev. John Buck, clerk, James Peter Auiol, William Chapman, Charles Græme, James Gandon, Hercules Browning and George Dalton, Esqrs. for and on behalf of themselves and several other persons who now have and shall hereafter subscribe towards completing the navigation of the river Shannon, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that by an act of Parliament passed in this kingdom in the twenty-seventh year of his present

Majesty's reign, ~~issued~~, An act for the directing the application of the funds granted by Parliament for promoting and carrying on inland navigation, the several persons therein particularly named, were constituted and appointed commissioners for managing, directing, improving, repairing and governing the navigation of the river Shannon; and it was thereby enacted, that the said commissioners should be a corporation, by the name of the corporation for carrying on and promoting the Shannon navigation, and that all rights, powers and authorities which were vested in the corporation for promoting and carrying on inland navigations in Ireland, so far as the same were necessary to enable said corporation thereby appointed to manage, direct, improve, repair and govern the said navigation from the deep water below Limerick to the collieries on Lough Allen, was thereby vested in said corporation by said act appointed; the petitioners further shew, that several sums of public money have been heretofore expended by the said corporation towards improving the navigation of the said river, but such expenditures have been ineffectual, and the works have been neglected and suffered to fall into decay, and the completing the navigation of the said river from the deep water above Killaloe, in the county of Clare, to the collieries at or near Lough Allen, in the county of Leitrim, would tend much to the improvement and emolument of the different counties bordering on the said river, and the kingdom in general would be much benefited thereby; and in order to complete the navigation of the said river, the petitioners and several other persons have associated themselves together by the name of the Shannon Navigation Company, and have subscribed several sums of money for the completing the navigation of the said river from the deep water above Killaloe to the collieries at or near Lough Allen aforesaid; and therefore praying the House to take their case into consideration, and to order that the petitioners may be incorporated by act of Parliament, by the name of the Shannon Navigation Company, for the purpose of carrying on and completing the navigation of the said river, with such powers, privileges and authorities as to the House shall seem meet.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

Leave was then given to bring in a bill, to enable certain persons to carry on and complete the navigation of the river Shannon from the deep water above Killaloe, in the county of Clare, to the collieries at or near Lough Allen, in the county of Leitrim; and that Mr. Wolfe, of Forenaughts, and Mr. Burgh, do prepare and bring in the same. On which

Mr. WOLFE, of Forenaughts, presented to the House, according to order, a bill to enable certain persons to carry on and complete the navigation of the river Shannon, from the deep water

above Killaloe, in the county of Clare, to the collieries at or near Lough Allen, in the county of Leitrim; which was received and read the first time.

A memorial of the malsters, brewers and distillers of the town of Wexford, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the malting trade of the town of Wexford is falling fast into decay; that the chief cause of such decay, is on account of the uncommonly encreased number of small malt-houses erected in different parts of the country contiguous to said town, by which the corn intended, as usual, for the supply thereof, is cut off and prevented from coming to market, and what there may be suffered to pass, is, in general, the refuse of the workers of such country malt-houses; therefore praying, that the House will cause a clause to be introduced into the revenue bill of this session, to prevent the further erection of or enlarging any malt-house or malt-houses within twelve miles of any maritime town in which a collector of his Majesty's revenue may reside, and likewise that a clause may be introduced to prevent any corn being wetted for the purpose of making into malt, during the three months, beginning the 12th day of June, and ending the 12th day of September in every year, it being well known to the brewers and distillers, that malt manufactured in these months is very deficient in produce, and there being at present a sufficiency of malt-houses erected for making of what corn the country may produce into good malt within the space of six months; and also that a further clause may be inserted in said bill, that all malt shall receive fourteen days flooring, or at least twelve days; and at the time of swearing to the bounty paper, to have it inserted in the oath, that the malt so shipped or forwarded by land, as the case may be, did receive the full number of fourteen or twelve clear days flooring at the least, as the case may be, and that no voucher shall be received by any collector, or other officer of customs, appointed to receive the same from any surveyor or gauger, until such surveyor or gauger shall first make oath that such malt as he may return in such vouchers did, *bonâ fide*, receive the full number of fourteen or twelve days flooring at the least; the memorialists beg further to suggest to the House, that from the lightness of barley in general produced in this kingdom, it will not stand the present mode of gauging, and the more effectual way of relieving the malsters, would be to allow five bushels out of every twenty, in lieu of the present allowance of four out of every twenty, in consideration of the difference between the corn when it is wet and swoln, and when it is converted into dry malt; the memorialists beg finally to state to the House, that unless the malting trade be confined to the cities and towns where it first originated, the malsters and others who

put themselves to a very considerable expense to bring the trade to perfection, in erecting houses and stores proper for carrying on the said trade, will be in a very few years ruined, as those buildings must fall to decay, and the occupiers thereof, of course, remove to the country parts, (where encouragement at present lies) by which those cities and towns will in time become depopulated, and the shipping thereunto belonging rendered useless; and therefore praying that the House will take those weighty premises into consideration, and grant them such immediate relief as to their wisdom may seem meet.

The memorial was ordered to lie on the table.

The Newry navigation bill was read a third time and passed, as was also three of the ordinary money-bills.

Mr. SECRETARY HOBART presented a message from his Majesty as follows,

“ His Majesty thanks the House of Commons for their dutiful and loyal address, and of their determination to support him in the prosecuting a just and necessary war, and to oppose an effectual barrier to the progress of a system dangerous to the peace of Europe, and the existence of civil government.”

The message was ordered to be entered on the Journals, and an address of thanks voted as usual.

Sir WILLIAM GLEADOWE NEWCOMEN presented a Malahide turnpike bill, which was read a first time.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY moved for leave to bring in a bill, to empower archbishops, bishops, deans of chapters, and other ecclesiastical bodies, to make leases for longer term of years, or for life.—Leave was given.

THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 1793.

Mr. HOBART moved a clause to be added to the Roman Catholic bill, “ that nothing in that bill contained should be construed to affect any suit now instituted concerning parish estates.” This clause had chiefly in contemplation the dispute in St. Catherine’s parish.

The clause being agreed to, the bill was then read a third time and passed.

The bill for modifying the hearth-money tax, by easing the poor thereof, was also read a third time and passed.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM thought, that at this important and awful crisis of affairs, when the heart of every man beat high with loyalty to his Sovereign, the proposal he was about to submit to the House would meet with universal approbation: he was confident it would have the happiest effect on the minds of those misguided wretches, who now disturb the peace, impede the growing prosperity, and hurt the credit of the nation; that it would shew the nation at large, that however we differed among ourselves in some political points, yet we were strenuous in support of our Sovereign, and zealous under distinct legislatures, of preserving our union and connection with Great Britain. He observed, that on former occasions he raised many men, by some additional bounty from himself, but he could not now afford such expence. A former Parliament had granted a sum of money to raise men, but he did not intend to move the House to grant any money out of the national fund; he only meant to state, that most of the cities and towns in Scotland, Wales and England, had subscribed large sums of money to give additional bounties;—that one set of gentlemen in London, had instituted a most laudable plan, which was a fund to provide for the wives and children of those brave tars that entered on board the fleet;—this was a considerable addition to the bounty; that it did not consist merely in the subscription of the day, but most of their subscriptions, amounting to several hundreds of pounds, were annually, during the war; he mentioned that plan originated with a worthy friend of his in London, whose literary abilities were always exerted for the good of Ireland, particularly in the years 1779 and 1781. He never communicated this plan to any one, until this morning, that he consulted two particular friends of his; one of them a most respectable dignitary of our church, whose public spirit can only be equalled by his private virtues:—he instantly subscribed fifty guineas;—this was an act of real patriotism. He hoped to be as successful in this, as he was in raising money for the West India Charity, where he got 10,000*l.* in a few days, towards which a right honorable member gave the princely donation of 1,000*l.*

With the greatest diffidence he then proposed his plan, which was—That a book should be left at the chief clerk's office, for such members and others as chose to subscribe and pay down the money;—but after forty members had subscribed, a committee of twenty-one should be chosen; that the Speaker, and other respectable characters on both sides of the House, should be of that committee, particularly those connected with the navy, whose zeal and abilities equally coincided in promoting the public service; the money to be lodged in one of the banks. That if

any redundancy remained, it should be given to the wives and children of such seamen as fell in defence of their country.

When once it was begun in that House, he was sure the members of the other House of Parliament would liberally subscribe, and among the Roman Catholics throughout the kingdom, it would be a struggle who should be first, and who should be most liberal in support of their most gracious Monarch, who recommended their case to Parliament. He observed, he made no motion, only threw out an idea for a voluntary subscription.

As soon as Sir Edward sat down, Mr. FORBES rose and moved the second reading of the place bill; which being done, he moved that it be committed.

Mr. HOBART said, he had no objection to the committal of the bill, approving as he did of its principle, but he thought considerable time should be allowed, well to weigh and digest its clauses, and therefore he proposed to the honourable gentleman to commit it for a distant day.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE—Sir, I rise to declare my disapprobation of this bill; I arrest it before it goes into the committee. The introduction of it now is critically improper. I think its principles at all times not admissible, upon any ground of sound policy. From the knowledge I have of the honourable gentleman's propriety and candour, I should rather have expected a motion from him, tending to strengthen the arm of the executive power, by an increase of his Majesty's army, and a well-regulated militia bill, to shield us from Jacobin principles, which seem to threaten the very existence of our happy laws and constitution. By the provisions of the bill before us, I find that the best friends of his Majesty's government, are shut out from Parliament: gentlemen who have been the faithful and steady supporters of Government at all times, and saved it from every violence attempted against it. In the first page I see some military characters excepted, men of the highest honour and reputation—so much so, that if the people at large were to give a vote, they would be chosen in preference to persons of any other description; men who have bled in their service, and are at all times ready to defend them. We are told that England has a place bill: give us English consistency and English virtue and then we may have one also. Does England innovate on her constitution at this time? No! on the contrary, the representatives and the represented unite like one man to oppose the enemies of their country. But if, in spite of my opposition, this bill should come into a committee, I myself will name exceptions in turn; I will except barristers, special pleaders and attornies, civilians, doctors of law, and fellows of the college: In short, considering it at all times as a ruinous system, I will pursue and clog it in every stage.

Mr. FORBES said, the honourable baronet had not sufficiently attended to the bill, or he would have seen that the officers of the army and of the navy are specially exempted from exclusion—an exemption to which their merits had most justly entitled them. He had indeed excluded, by the bill, the household of the lord lieutenant from seats in Parliament; and the circumstance of the honourable baronet's being so totally unacquainted with the bill, had proved the justice of that exclusion, for certainly it was, because his official avocations would not allow him time, that he had not read it, if he had, he would have seen the attentions paid to the officers of the army and navy. He concluded with saying, that as the right honourable Mr. Hobart had no objection to the principle of the bill, he hoped he would consent to its committal at an early day.

Mr. HOBART said, he would wish as far as the circumstances of this country would possibly admit, to assimilate its laws and constitution to those of England; he therefore approved the principle of the bill, but he by no means pledged himself to adopt the honourable gentleman's mode of carrying that principle into effect. He was therefore for giving the bill the most attentive consideration, but had no idea of consenting to any thing that could weaken his Majesty's government in Ireland.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he believed if the framers of the bill had indulged their private feelings, they would not have excluded any one, but they must carry the principle of the bill into effect, the principle could not be resisted, and by it certainly many worthy and valuable persons would be affected—the gentlemen of the army less than any.

But to return to the subject, at the beginning of the session, the House was taught to hope, that much would be done for the country; the motive for gentlemen's agreeing to every measure of his Majesty's ministers was founded upon that hope. We were taught to expect great matters; accordingly we moved a place bill, a pension bill, a responsibility bill, and a parliamentary reform—that darling wish of the people. The business of government went on; no opposition, no embarrassment; but having sat two months, the period is surely now come, when we should think of a redress of grievances. We expect the ministers will state what is to be done for the country. He knows our commerce is not on the same footing with that of England; he knows our constitution is not the same; he has declared that he wishes to assimilate the two countries, so do we all. What then does he intend to offer on his part? On ours we have freely come forward, and resolved to share the fate of England—her adversity and her prosperity; we have granted men and money to support her wars; we ought therefore to be gratified in our reasonable wishes; for,

Sir, it is foolish to suppose we will go on in this style of liberality, when we know we have but the shadow of a constitution. I wish to know from the minister, are we on the eve of a settlement? It is necessary he should speak out. I know there was a period in the session when they were determined to concede the wishes of the nation: Have they departed from that determination? Or will they say, they are disposed to it, and are withheld by England? On the subject of parliamentary reform, ministers themselves have encouraged the nation to hope for it, and by so doing, have brought the kingdom into a situation that makes it impossible for them to retract, and if they put it off for the chances of the summer, they are equally the enemies of England and of Ireland, for the only true policy is to administer such redress as will satisfy the people: we have made great grants, and have a right to expect an equivalent return.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER. I have the misfortune to differ from the right honourable gentleman in the account he gives of the transactions of this session. The right honourable gentleman states the loyal and liberal conduct of Parliament, in granting his Majesty aid to repel foreign force, as if it had been done by composition, as if the loyalty of Parliament could only be purchased by concession from the crown, as if the crown had been obliged to make a bargain with the nation to defend itself against destruction; which it would not have done, but under a compromise of obtaining certain objects; this, Sir, I deny to be the fact, the Parliament and the people, animated with the same spirit of liberality and loyalty, have freely and unequivocally declared their fixed determination to support his Majesty, in a just and necessary war: they have, in the most honourable manner, granted great supplies, not upon the paltry principle of bargain and sale, but upon those of duty, loyalty, and self-defence, and whatever has been proposed in Parliament to gratify the people, has been founded on his Majesty's gracious wish of contenting and uniting all his subjects; not by way of buying fidelity and affection from the people, whose most distinguishing characteristics those virtues have ever been. Sir, it is extremely material to this country that we should all unite to forward his Majesty's gracious intention; that we should not exasperate the public mind, by telling the people they have got nothing, though they have given much; the truth is, that very great and substantial advantages have been conferred on the people this very session, all of which have originated with his Majesty's ministers; and it is but this moment we have heard the minister declare explicitly, that his object is to assimilate the constitutions of the two countries as much as possible, and give equal benefits to each; surely this, Sir, is of more importance to the nation, than the idle chimeras

in which gentleman indulge, when they introduce measures in which they themselves have no confidence, though they call them measures of the people—redress of grievances—and I know not what; though the people neither know nor care anything about them, and if not exasperated and irritated, would be perfectly contented and happy, in the blessings which their sovereign's love, and the attention of Parliament, every day confers and secures to them.

Sir, I do not hesitate to say, that if the bills, of which gentlemen have spoken, are the same that I have formerly seen, much better means might be taken to accomplish the same purpose; but this is certain, that nothing can more discourage ministers from endeavouring to gratify the people, and to advance the prosperity of the country, than to teach the people to believe all that is done is of no manner of value.

The right honourable gentleman [Mr. Hobart] has given the House a most liberal assurance of his intention—from his past conduct he has a right to take credit for the future, for certainly he has conceded more this session than ever was conceded in any former session.—Though gentlemen have had the ingenuity to discover a new set of grievances before which every benefit must vanish. But if they really love their country, (as I am convinced they do) they will desist from exasperating the people; they will consider the situation of Europe, plunged in a bloody and destructive war, through the dire influence of wild theorists; they will consider the fallen state of public credit in our own nation, from insurrection and discontent, promoted by the seditious writings of factious levellers. They will then think it time to sacrifice private feelings to public good, and join with those who wish to promote his Majesty's gracious intention of promoting public contentment and public happiness. Nothing will aid this more powerfully than shewing the country the value of what we have obtained for them; and if gentlemen chuse to help us with their information, if they wish to quiet the nation, if they have acted hitherto upon principle, and do not desire to encourage discontent, they will at this moment, support a Government which deserves so much confidence for its sincerity and candour, in every measure that it has brought before this House.

Mr. DENIS BROWNE said, that very material concessions had been made this session to the people; this session has done more for the people than any session for these many years past; the measure of giving relief to the Roman Catholics has gratified, and highly obliged a very numerous and grateful race of men; that has been a measure which has rendered substantial benefits: but as to a place bill, a pension bill, and a responsibility bill, the people are totally indifferent about them.

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) said, that as the only difference between his honourable friend and the right honourable secretary, appeared to be about the day on which this bill should be committed, he hoped that so small a matter might easily be accommodated, particularly as he had the pleasure to hear the right honourable gentleman declare himself to be a friend to the principle of the bill, and also declare his wish, that the constitution of this country should be assimilated, as far as circumstances will admit, to that of Great Britain.

After these declarations he was sure his honourable friend would be content to let the right honourable secretary fix the day, provided he would consent that this and the other bills for the reform, now before the House, should proceed *pari passu*, with the measures of Government.

Mr. HOBART said, he knew of no measure of Government now before the House, but he knew one very much desired by the country, the militia bill, which had ever been considered as the great desideratum of the nation; if gentlemen should think it a good measure, they would support it; but it must not be considered as a measure of Government.

Mr. BARRINGTON said, that in order to preserve that consistency of conduct, which it was his earnest wish to preserve both in public and private life, he conceived it his duty to tell the House why he opposed the committal of the bill. He opposed it, because he conceived it to be a measure incroaching upon the prerogative of the Crown, by restraining it in the choice of its servants; as a measure incroaching upon the franchises of the constituent body, by restraining it in the choice of its representatives; as a measure incroaching upon the rights of the representation, by depriving the representative of the honour of delegation; and as a measure tending to declare that the interests of the crown and the interests of the people were distinct. And he would argue upon their own proposition; he would conclude from their own premises, and debate upon their own principle. They had said, "Give us the British constitution;" he would answer—You have the British constitution, as far as the different relative situation of the country would admit with safety to their connection. In a mixed government like ours, the practice more than the theory of the constitution is to be considered. The theory says, the three branches of the British constitution are co-extensive in their powers, but the practice shews the contrary; the executive power is by far the weakest and least dangerous to the constitution, because its powers, its prerogative and its rights are now defined and limited. The other two branches of the constitution watch over its actions with a jealous eye, and when it endeavours to step over the circle which is drawn round it, it

is arrested in its progress, and instantly brought back to its primitive limits. Not so with the democratic part of the constitution; its powers are not defined and limited so far as to prevent their extension in any contest between the Crown and the Commons; the latter have been victorious, and every struggle in England since the constitution has been matured—has ended in a conquest of the Commons over the Crown; little is to be apprehended from the influence of the Crown, but every thing from the power of the democracy. The increase of democracy will more effectually destroy the present constitution than any strong effort of the Crown, which would instantly unite both the other parts against it. A moderate influence of the Crown, particularly at the present moment, in the Commons House, is absolutely necessary for the preservation of the present form of government, because though the theory of the constitution gives a veto to the Crown, yet experience shews that the Crown cannot venture to exercise that power (though a constitutional one) against a strong popular measure, even though that measure affected its constitutional prerogative, such an exercise of that power might shake monarchy to its foundation; how then is the Crown to preserve her prerogative.

How is the Crown to protect her rights? how is the Crown to support her privileges against the weight of the democracy? She is to protect it by the voice of her servants in the Commons; acting as advocates, not for the increase, but for the preservation of her prerogative, and in defending the Crown, defending the constitution. The influence of the Crown in England and Ireland, must then be considered both as to its quantum and its operation: in the British House of Commons there are one hundred and eight placemen, or men holding commissions under the Crown, and there are forty-nine sons of noblemen who are in the service of the Crown or of the Government; which, with other influence unknown in this country, gives a much greater proportion of influence in England than here, exclusive of the national influence arising from the royal residence in that country: we, though politically connected, are a detached Government, and the royal presence which in Great Britain is the source of loyalty to the people, is here only by substitution, and that substitution often shamefully made the theme, not of loyalty, but of invective. What is the operation of influence as attached to the two countries? In England, though it possesses more, it has a necessity for less influence than in Ireland. The people of England support their government, they cling to it as their protector; men act for their own interests by acting for the government; the government is the most popular thing in that country; their king lives with them; they have no country they wish to sever from. Is that the case in Ireland, where two thirds of the country have always run counter to every Government that

ever was set over it, and every viceroy that ever governed it? When the whole influence of the minister is hardly sufficient to preserve the connection between the two countries; when all his influence is not sufficient to prevent the language and the actions of sedition; in a country, where in public places public men dare to say, "What have we to do with Great Britain? we have ports of our own; we have revenues of our own; we can form establishments of our own; for twenty-five thousand ducats a year we may buy a little Washington for ourselves, and enjoy the freedom of France, and the independence of America." Is there too much influence of the Crown in a country holding language like this? Is there too much influence of the Crown in a country where an opposition, linked in association, is pursuing the same dangerous system which disgraced the opposition of England? No—drive not the servants of the Crown from its protection; in times like these, what weakens the Crown will destroy the constitution. In England the great interest of their establishments, both civil and military; the great interest of their revenue, and its collection; the great weight of resident loyalty, made a measure necessary, or at least prudent there; which at this moment to us will be ruin. But look one moment to the bill, and it will be found a gross deception upon the people, a gross insult to the House, and the first effort of a most dangerous system.

Its preamble says, that "for securing the freedom and independence of Parliament, &c." What is the freedom and independence they wish to secure? Perhaps they may call general license to abuse his Majesty's government, and every gentleman who supports it; the freedom and independence of Parliament. Perhaps gentlemen may call speaking one way and voting another, the freedom and independence of Parliament; or they may call reprobating the Catholics in 1792, and adulating them and humbling to them, and kissing the dust from their shoes, and talking to them in the language of election, and the dialects of canvass, the freedom and independence of Parliament. No, freedom and independence is an individual and not a general principle: not to be procured by acts of Parliament, or enacted by royal assent, unless the road to it be paved by original principle and natural integrity; the freedom and independence of Parliament never could be said to be in danger till they desert the constitution. This act purported by its title to be "for preventing persons appointed to offices after a certain day from sitting in Parliament;" a specious title; but is that the act in trust? No—not one word of it; it is in truth an act to prevent almost any officer of the Crown (save about ten) from sitting in Parliament; and these ten are by the act specifically excepted, and also specifically adapted to ten honourable members on the other side of the House: but how are they to get into them? Thus—pass a place bill, the influence of the Crown is crippled; pass a pension bill, it is annihilated. Then comes the pure de-

mocracy; the honourable members on the other side lead it by their principles, or, perhaps, by their talents: the present Government is turned out, they step in, then the responsibility bill begins to operate; a bill which, under pretence of making the servants of the Crown responsible for the public money, in fact takes from the executive power its constitutional interference in finance; sets up four commissioners as a curb to the Crown; makes them superior to the executive power; puts your king in leading-strings; the democracy gains daily strength; the honourable members lead it to conquest, and their country will enjoy all the curses of a republic, with the title of monarchy. This is their system, the people see it: he dreaded in common with every loyal subject in the country, with every man who loved the constitution, that the memory of the political virtue of 1779 and 1782, would be lost in the political vices of 1793; he dreaded that the fruits of public virtue, which for some years have seemed to hang in rich and luxuriant clusters round the temples of some honourable gentleman, from the desperate system of their present politics, are likely to fall from their brows blasted, withered, shrunk, a fatal poison to that very soil which first fed their luxuriance. For his part, he said, his principles were fixed, invariably fixed to the present constitution, and he would gratify his pride in saying, that for near a century and a half, with very little intermission, his family had the honour of seats in that House, and that, thank God, they had been unequivocally rivetted to the constitution, and uniformly attached to their legal and legitimate sovereigns; and he would not now disgrace their memories; he would support the principles that they did, and die with the same attachments. Conceiving then the present bill, at the present crisis, in the light he placed it to the House, how could he concede to its committal? He could not: as a friend to the Crown, to the country and to the constitution, he renounced it; he renounced it as the true roll of St. John, "sweet in the mouth but bitter in the belly;" he renounced it as a man-trap of republican system, and the dangerous nestling of distorted projects and pedantic talents, hatched in a British coffee-house, and fledged in an Irish senate.

Mr. PONSONBY, junior, declared he should not have spoken in the debate, had not the honourable member uttered so inflammatory a libel on the constitution of the country, and on the practice of Government. He called the honourable member's speech an inflammatory libel, because it asserted that the existence of regal influence in the representative body, which was but a more delicate name for corruption, was essential to the constitution.

He then entered into a review of the conduct of opposition from the commencement of the session, and shewed, from the alacrity with which they had voted to Government every neces-

fary strength, and perhaps some measures, such as the gunpowder act, which were not necessary, that they had no design whatsoever of embarrassing his Majesty's Government. The insinuations of the honourable member therefore, with respect to opposition, were false, and his language inflammatory and seditious; as it taught the country that Government, in this kingdom, was supported only by corruption. He hoped, therefore, he should hear such language no more in that House.

As to the bill he professed himself a warm friend to it, as it went to effect an internal reform of Parliament, which, in his mind, was more necessary than an external one. Forms were not the essence of the constitution. The essence of Parliament consisted in its being perfectly free to discuss every public measure, and scrutinize impartially the conduct of the minister. Could they do this, he asked, while the majority were constituted of men enjoying from that minister places of great emolument? Would not an arbitrary negative be put on every question that might affect him? On these accounts he was decidedly for the bill, and for an early committal of it.

Mr. MAXWELL supported the principle of the bill, because it went only to reduce within due limits, not to eradicate, the influence of the Crown. Totally to eradicate that influence, he thought, would be wrong, as the most mischievous evil that could exist would be a House of Commons purely democratic.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD was fearful that if the bill should pass, as members could not vacate their seats in that House, the great offices, particularly those of revenue, must be put into the hands of inexperienced men.

Mr. FORBES, in reply to the objection, that the bill operated particularly against the gentlemen of the army, said, that on an attentive perusal it would be found to have favoured that respectable profession more than any other. He admitted that the bill was formed on a more comprehensive scale than any he had hitherto introduced on the subject; but this difference had not originated from the motives stated; in fact a measure similar to the present had been in his contemplation in the session of 1791; but on communication with his right honourable friend, [Mr. Grattan] he had determined against bringing it forward at that period; from its great extent he was persuaded it must ever be considered as an important branch of parliamentary reform, and, therefore, in prudence, ought to be pressed on the House until the minds of the members were prepared to entertain that subject; as that disposition now prevailed he felt himself justified in framing the bill, in a manner different from those presented at former periods. If gentlemen could examine the state of the pa-

tronage of the Crown in England, at the time the principal disqualifying act passed, and recollect the great disproportion between the numbers in the English and Irish House of Commons, they will find that the exclusion of placemen, proposed by the present bill, is not so extensive as that produced by the operation of the English law. He here enumerated the places excepted from the exclusion, and shewed that after the adoption of his system, it would be competent for all the principal officers in the most important departments of the state, to sit in the House of Commons, subject to a re-election on the acceptance of such offices; that placemen of any other description should be members, was neither consistent with the dignity of the House, nor necessary for the dispatch of public business; they could only be retained in Parliament for the purpose of preserving that old system of ministerial influence, for the destruction of which the bill was devised. Respecting the apprehensions, that the bill tended to reduce the influence of the Crown so low as to render the constitution democratic, he contended they were ill founded; as an indirect operation of that influence on the House could not be prevented; it was so subtle in its nature as to elude the force of any law; and consequently though the members, after passing the bill, could not be gratified with offices beyond a certain number, yet the minister must retain the capacity of attaching them very strongly to his interest, by disposing of places to the sons and near connections of such members. He added, that without an external parliamentary reform, much of the beneficial operation of the bill must be prevented.

He said, that after having laboured eight years in pursuit of this object, certainly the arrival of the bill in a committee must afford him much satisfaction. He trusted that the right honourable Secretary would grant it a safe conduct through the committee; that he would not suffer it to be pared down and reduced to an half measure, but prove his sincerity on the subject of internal reform, by a cordial co-operation with the authors of the measure.

The question on the committal of the bill was now carried; and the question put, that the House resolve itself into a committee on the bill the 20th of April next.

Mr. HOBART asked how the right honourable gentleman could think of making a measure, which according to his own idea was intended to secure the country against the descent of a foreign enemy, go *pari passu* with a bill which was postponed for several weeks? In the interim the country might be ruined. He again denied that it was a measure of Government, but declared that as it seemed a measure necessary for the security of the country, it had the most cordial support of Government.

Mr. DUNN argued against postponing the committal to so late a day, and supported its principle. If the Secretary finally should oppose this bill, he hoped he would give him an answer to those who asked, "Why is not Ireland permitted to enjoy the benefits of the British constitution? Why has she not responsible ministers? Why has she not a limited pension list like England? Why is not her representative body, like that of Great Britain, guarded against placed and pensioned men?" For, however, liberally he himself might think of the gentlemen in that House who hold offices and pensions, yet the world in general would be apt to think that these gentlemen, like most other men, acted from motives of self-interest.

Mr. HOBART rose to declare, that by voting for the committal of this bill, he by no means considered himself engaged to vote for any of the clauses of it.

The question for committing it on the 20th of April was then put, and carried.

The second reading of the militia bill being called for as the order of the day,

Mr. FORBES moved, that the second reading of the bill should be postponed to the 19th of April.

This motion produced some debate; and the necessity for the militia was allowed on all hands; there was no difference of opinion, except as to the time which was necessary for previous consideration.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH declared, upon his honour, that he had not the least idea of giving Government influence by this bill, but designed by it merely to procure an efficient and constitutional defence for the country.

Mr. GRATTAN, in substance, said, a bill of 68 pages, delivered at one o'clock this morning, purporting to give to Government a military force of, I have heard, sixteen thousand men in addition to the army, and with all the consequent expence thereupon, is offered to your consideration to-night, with a view to commit it to-morrow, and report it the next day. Sir, the greatest enemy of the bill could not take a more effectual method to damn it for ever, except that the intemperate language with which it is pressed is more prejudicial even than this precipitation; for some gentlemen have urged the militia as a defence against the people; they have traduced the people; they have misrepresented their loyalty and affection; they have confounded with levellers and defenders the mass of the people of Ireland. I entirely agree, that certain insurgents are in part the object of this measure; but I must suppose, as I make no doubt it is the intention of the

noble mover, that the militia is proposed principally to defend us against the French. Were I to collect any thing from that clamour which has been put forth this night in this House, I should fear that, by some, something more was expected; that a defence against foreign and domestic enemies was expected, and that as soon as this measure passed, the hope of the reform of Parliament vanished.

I entirely agree, therefore, with an honourable gentleman, that the militia should accompany the redress of grievances, and I am for postponing the consideration of the militia to that time, which ministers have fixed for discussing the internal reform of Parliament, the place bill, &c. and which will be the time when the more equal representation of the people will be considered. In this delay, I am not opposing a militia, I am defending a reform. I am of opinion, that the militia and the constitutional settlement should be considered together, and I observe those who press forward the former, are the old enemies to the latter, and, therefore, suspect their zeal and clamour; they both are manifested by those who do not love our measures, neither reform nor any of them. I repeat it—I say the constitutional settlement and the militia should be considered together: on this ground, I do not fear to stand with a few against the power of this assembly. Gentlemen have told you it will be too late to array the militia, if you postpone the bill till April. Why then did the minister postpone the place bill till that time? Why are these concessions which we are to expect postponed till that time? We were ready, and are now ready, to go into the business of the constitutional settlement, but the minister having postponed that subject, forces on us the difficulty of postponing the other; otherwise we shall give every thing before we secure any thing. Besides, who were the cause of the necessity of this postponement? Those who did not bring on the militia bill for near two months, that is, till the assizes; from the difficulty, I suppose, of the subject, and now surely cannot think that we require not more than two days to deliberate upon it. But the ground on which I stand is this: let the constitutional settlement and the militia be considered together; and to those gentlemen who talk of the delay and difficulty of carrying the militia into execution, I will inform them that the most easy method of arraying the militia, is to reconcile the people to it, by redressing their grievances. The reform of Parliament would facilitate a militia more, much more than our precipitation. I am, therefore, for postponing the consideration of the militia to the consideration of the constitutional settlement.

Mr. FORBES said, that he did not object to the principle of a militia bill, in the abstract it was certainly an unexceptionable measure; but it ought to be considered by the House relatively;

and viewing it in that light, first respecting England, he could not discern many shades of difference between a standing army and the militia, under its present circumstances, in that kingdom; for the lord lieutenant of the county, who appointed the officers, held his situation at the will of the minister, and the cases of Lord Caermarthen and Lord Pembroke proved (who were dismissed from the government of their respective counties, for their speeches in parliament against the administration) that a bold and independent assertion of opinions was incompatible with the possession of that office, as well as of any other place at the disposal of the minister; some exceptions, he admitted, might be adduced, where a silent vote was not punished with deprivation; but, activity in Parliament, of a tendency adverse to ministry, seldom escaped with impunity. He supported his objection to the English militia, as at present constituted; also, his arguments drawn from the circumstances of admitting half-pay officers into that service; an exception to which the present bill was likewise subject. And next, respecting Ireland, this measure, he contended, could only be effectuated by the concurrence of the people; to adopt it at a period when most of the country gentlemen are, unavoidably, absent by their attendance at the assizes, is not only impolitic in regard to the country, but disrespectful to those gentlemen. He urged the House to postpone the consideration of the measure till after the assizes, when they could have the advantage of the advice and opinion of the country members, as to the practicability, as well as the mode of effecting it, who must be possessed of the sentiments of their constituents on the subject, and to whom those gentlemen, during the recess, could explain the nature and tendency of the bill. He mentioned as another inducement for deferring the decision of the question till after the proposed adjournment, that then, this measure might be accompanied with such bills, as are calculated to afford contentment to the people. A bill which is to encrease the military establishment of Ireland to thirty-six thousand men, ought to proceed *pari passu* with a redress of grievances; without this concomitant circumstance, the militia cannot produce the effect which many gentlemen are taught to expect from it.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, if gentlemen allowed the principle of the bill to be a good one, they paid their constituents a very ill compliment by supposing they could disapprove of it. He thought, however, that the House should do their duty whatever might be the opinion of the people; either the bill was necessary, or it was not; if it were necessary, why should gentlemen delay putting the country in a state of defence for twenty-five days; if it were not necessary, it should be rejected entirely, and not suffered to go into committee at all.

If the principle of the bill is just; if its necessity is obvious; if it has ever been an object eagerly desired by the best and most popular friends of Ireland, it is an ill compliment to the people to suppose that they should reject it, as it would be a bad measure to go to them to solicit their disapprobation.

A militia, Sir, is certainly the most constitutional force we can have; a force is necessary, and it is our duty to see that it stand upon constitutional ground; for if the post of strength must be occupied, it must either be by a militia or something less constitutional. It is proposed to put off, for twenty-five days, a measure that will take three months to be carried into effect. Is the country in danger or not? If it is, will you consider whether or no you will defend yourselves? And if that be not a question, why should you defer your means of defence until they shall be too late?

It would indeed be absurd, Sir, if a militia which has been in England adopted as the most constitutional mode of defence, and which in Ireland has long been the wish of her best and most popular characters, should, when offered in the very moment of danger, be rejected with wanton caprice. If you reject it now, be assured you will wish for it again in vain; you will wish for it when you will not be able to obtain it; every gentleman, therefore, who blends his private interest with the public safety, will seize the present opportunity of securing a measure on which that safety depends.

MR. STAPLES.—I hope no gentleman can possibly object to the principle of this bill; a militia is unquestionably the most constitutional defence of the country; it is a defence that now appears absolutely necessary, and I hope it will be carried into immediate execution; a single hour should not be lost. Gentlemen have often talked of assimilating our constitution to that of England; I know of no measure so necessary to that assimilation.

SIR WILLIAM GLEADOWE NEWCOMEN.—I wish to forward this bill with all possible expedition, that when I go down to the assizes I may tell the gentlemen I have the honour to represent, that Parliament has provided the long wished for constitutional defence for the country.

THE HON. MR. STEWART said, he conceived there could be but one object in respect to the bill, viz. to discuss it fully, and to decide upon it without any unnecessary delay. Whatever difference of sentiment there might be on the subject, no gentleman could wish to temporize with such a measure; it appeared to him, however, impossible to go through the bill in committee before Saturday next, on which day an adjournment was expected; if so, why press the second reading of the bill, which is the usual

stage of general discussion? To the abstract principle of the bill he was a friend; he considered a militia as a most constitutional defence. He only doubted whether, in addition to the very large military force which had already been voted, a further augmentation was necessary; and also whether the friends to militia had chosen the most judicious moment for its establishment. The general sense of the House being so decidedly for immediately establishing a militia, he must acquiesce, and doing so, he felt it his duty to declare, that whatever objections he might hitherto have had to the policy, as well as to the necessity of the measure, so soon as the bill should pass into a law, no effort should be wanting on his part to carry it effectually into execution; convinced that the advantage of such an institution to the kingdom, must wholly depend upon its being respectably constituted.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY.—I hope I shall not be deemed an enemy to the bill: it must be remembered that I took a very strong part indeed to promote a similar measure. The principle being universally admitted, we have only to take care of the clauses and economy of the bill, for which purpose a reasonable time should be allowed to consider it in committee.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH said, he understood there was to be a recess for the next week; if so, he would propose to go into a committee on the bill to-morrow, and if in the committee any striking difficulty should arise, he would be ready to report progress, and adjourn the further consideration of the bill until after the recess.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE said, there were very few cases in which he would wish to follow the example of the French convention; but in the present case he would: he would propose a permanent sitting until the bill was gone through, for he knew he could not bring down to his country a more acceptable present than this bill; he knew, and the country knew, how absolutely necessary it was to check the spirit of rebellion, and defend them from the attacks of those men whose arms were less destructive than their doctrines.

He had heard of grievances; for his part, since the Catholics had obtained relief, he knew of no grievances in the land, except the seditious writings of wicked and factious men, who had destroyed public credit, and driven a number of unhappy wretches to the gallows; and, he believed, the opposition of some northern counties to the bill arose from their knowing that it put an end to the efforts of rebellion.

Mr. JOHN O'NEILL.—Being a northern member, it gives me great pleasure to say, that all the north country gentlemen agree

in the principle of the bill, and are determined to support it as a measure highly constitutional, and evidently necessary. In carrying it into effect, we have for our guide the laws which have long been in force in England, and it will not be very hard to assimilate our practice to this; I am a most decided advocate for the measure, and think it should proceed with the utmost expedition possible.

Mr. BURTON gave his most decided support to the bill.

Mr. KNOX said, that this country was now in the same situation that England was in, in the month of December last, when she arrayed her militia to suppress the factious and levelling spirit that then prevailed; she instantly felt the benefits of that array, and so would we if we had a militia embodied.

Mr. BROOKE spoke in support of the measure, and urged the House to continue sitting until it should be carried into effect.

Mr. BARRINGTON warmly supported the principle of a militia bill.

Colonel BLAQUIERE observed it to be something very extraordinary, that the bill now depending should meet with the smallest opposition; every man in the House knew that those who now opposed it, stated some few days ago in all their arguments, that the minds of the people were disturbed; there had been very evident signs of commotion in almost every part of the kingdom; a militia was surely the most effectual, and only remedy, that at present he knew of, to quiet and preserve the tranquillity of the country; that the opposition now made against proceeding upon the bill was certainly ill founded, for that gentleman could not forget, what so lately happened in this House, that the chief arguments still assigned for passing the Catholic bill, was to quiet and reconcile the disturbances impending in the nation; for his part, he wished to see the bill put to the vote, as he was certain that the majority, on the last great question, would find that this would not be carried in that decided and effeminate manner as they carried the last, by allowing so precipitately such a chasm to be made in the constitution; he would not, however, intrude farther on the patience of the House, for that the arguments used by the opposition, in this case, were so inconsistent, that in his opinion they required no answer; that, therefore, he should give his vote for immediately committing the bill, and proceeding directly upon it.

Mr. OGLE. After the declaration which I made the other night, "that I would not again trouble this House, by speaking on any subject after that which was dearest to my heart was given

up," it may appear extraordinary that I now address you Sir; but as I was the father of the former militia bill, it may be supposed that I have changed my opinion, if I do not say a word in support of this; for the former bill I struggled hard, and with great difficulty carried it: its enemies contrived to make it ineffectual, though, in my mind, at the time I proposed it, it was a most necessary measure; but if such a measure was necessary then, it is ten thousand times more necessary now; and I advise gentlemen to embrace this opportunity of having an effectual militia bill; for if they miss it, it may never occur again.

Mr. WARBURTON delivered his opinion in favour of the bill; as did Sir EDWARD CROFTON, Sir LAWRENCE PARSONS, Sir HENRY CAVENDISH, Mr. NEVILLE, and

General CUNINGHAME observed, that forming and embodying the militia, after the bill should have passed, would take at least three months; and if it were now at the desire of the hon. gentleman, [Mr. Forbes] to be postponed for six weeks, it would be impossible for the militia to attain an idea of discipline in the ensuing summer, by which means every good effect of the bill would so far be defeated. [During this and most of the foregoing speeches, the House declared its approbation of whatever was said in favour of the bill, by the loud and general cry of hear! hear! hear!]]

This, Mr. GRATTAN, in very strong terms, condemned; he called it clamour; he said it was not deciding a measure as legislators after deliberation, but by acclamation. He deprecated the terms of severity in which gentlemen had spoken, as terms unworthy of them; he deprecated the charge of being an enemy to the bill—he was not; he wished but to confine it to constitutional principles; there was but one ground upon which it could be necessary; the apprehension of a descent from France; in that case it would be wise to conciliate the nation to it; but nothing could tend to make it so completely unpopular as precipitating it through the House. He again desired that he might not be considered as an enemy to the bill, but as one who wished to press it, if upon due deliberation it should be found expedient.

Mr. HOBART observed, that the right honourable gentleman had admitted, that the bill might be expedient upon the ground of a French descent; if so, then he could not perceive the wisdom of delaying our defence until the country should be lost; whatever time was lost by delaying the bill, was just so much deducted from that which should be employed in making preparation to repel the enemy.—The measure, he repeated, was not

a measure of Government, but of the country, and that which the right honourable gentleman called clamour, was in truth the honest effusions and cordial concurrence of country gentlemen, who were happy in obtaining the most constitutional mode of defence, that the wisdom and patriotism of England had ever devised, as then it was the wish likewise, and should from thenceforward receive the utmost support of Government.

Mr. STEWART (of Killymoon) said, that he should not have spoke a word in this stage of the business, if the volunteers had not been mentioned in the debate; but connected as he is and enrolled with them, he felt it his duty to remind the House of their services and their merits; he was of opinion that after this bill shall be passed into a law, the country will not be so secure at home, nor so formidable to our enemies, as it was during the course of the last war, when Ireland depended solely on volunteers for her defence: he wished to call to the recollection of the House their conduct during the administration of Lord Carlisle, when the French fleet was supposed to be off the coast of Ireland for the purpose of making a descent; at that time upwards of thirty thousand volunteers offered their service to Government. Such conduct ought to be held in everlasting and grateful remembrance by the country; he did not say this in opposition to the bill now before the House, the two systems ought not to be considered as opposed to each other, but he called on gentlemen to be grateful.

He did not object to the principle of the bill, but, with others, he desired time to consider it; the noble lord who introduced it seemed inclined to comply, and he hoped no gentleman would attempt to precipitate a measure of such consequence.

Mr. FORBES withdrew his former motion, and moved the second reading might be adjourned until Monday se'nnight; but on assurances from friends to the bill, that it should not be reported until Monday se'nnight, he withdrew his motion; and, in order that the fate of so important a measure should be decided in as full an House as possible, he moved for a call of the House on Monday se'nnight, which was negatived without a division.

The question was then put, that the bill be committed for tomorrow, which was at length carried in the affirmative.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 1793.

The SECRETARY OF STATE presented a bill for the application of certain sums of money, heretofore granted towards providing and maintaining a botany garden.

It was read a first time.

The bill to prevent insurance of lottery tickets, and to regulate and amend the laws respecting the same, was read a third time and passed.

The bill for the relief of persons who have omitted to take the oath, prescribed in the act of the fourteenth of his present Majesty, &c. was read a third time and passed.

Lord Belmore's divorce bill, and the tithe trustee bill, were read a first time.

The House, according to order, resolved into a committee on the militia bill; Mr. MASON in the chair.

In its progress several desultory conversations arose; those that chiefly attracted notice were, first, the clause which ascertained the qualifications as to property, which render gentlemen competent as to the respective degrees of command.

The English militia bill, of which Lord Hillsborough avowed this to be a transcript, requires the qualification of a colonel to be but 1000*l.* a year; but after a discussion of some length, this was considered an incompetent sum, and amended to 2000*l.* and that of lieutenant colonel's to 1600*l.*

A subsequent clause goes to allow peers and their sons admission to posts in the militia, in any county where they have a residence, without requiring them to lodge with the clerk of the peace the qualification as to property.

This was warmly opposed by Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY, Mr. VANDELEUR, and Sir LAURENCE PARSONS, who objected that this would open a patronage to Government, for appointing the sons of peers to the principal command, in counties where they had no property, to the great disgust of the resident gentlemen. It was supported by Lord HILLSBOROUGH, the Hon. Mr. WESLEY, the Hon. DENIS BROWNE, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. JOHN O'NEILL, Mr. BUSHE and Mr. OGLE, as a matter of mere compliment to the peerage, and by no means pregnant with any unsalutary purpose.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY moved for expunging the clause; and Sir LAURENCE PARSONS moved, in amendment, an exception merely as to the posts of colonels and lieutenant colonels; but both were negatived.

For the motion and amendment, 29—Against them, 125.

When the chairman came to that clause, which is to apportion the number of men to each county, Lord HILLSBOROUGH rose and said, that as this was the most important clause in the whole bill, and required most time for consideration, he should, for

the present, barely state the calculation of numbers, by which he proposed to fill up the blanks; this calculation he had formed from the best information he could collect, and from what he conceived to be the most accurate documents, the number of acres and the number of hearths in each county; this calculation he proportioned at the rate of $5\frac{1}{2}$ men to 3000 acres, or 21 men to 1000 hearths; and on this ground the proportions would stand thus:

<i>Counties.</i>	<i>Men as to Acres.</i>	<i>Men as to Hearths.</i>
Cork,	1400	1700
Kerry,	310	445
Limerick,	525	640
Tipperary,	850	685
Waterford,	370	380
Dublin,	175	550
Kilkenny,	410	400
Kildare,	325	220
King's County,	365	330
Queen's County,	340	340
Wexford,	456	470
Wicklów,	360	240
Carlow,	170	100
Clare,	625	370
Galway,	1105	525
Leitrim,	295	275
Mayo,	1135	525
Roscommon,	460	400
Sligo,	345	330
Antrim,	516	600
Armagh,	200	600
Down,	500	850
Louth,	160	285
Meath,	465	510
Monaghan,	240	470
Cavan,	350	400
Donnegal,	900	550
Fermanagh,	330	250
Londonderry,	360	600
Longford,	190	225
Tyrone,	510	710
Westmeath,	355	310

What, as the noble lord observed, was very remarkable, that notwithstanding the inequality of proportions, as to acres and hearths in each county individually, yet when the whole numbers of men on each calculation were added, the difference between both was not one hundred, that on the calculation of acres being

15,655, and that on the number of hearths 15,560. He had forgot to mention the city and county of Drogheda, which had already raised their own militia, 200 men, and the city of Dublin, which he judged might very readily afford 500. His lordship then moved that this clause be postponed for further consideration till to-morrow.

The committee afterwards sat on other clauses until one o'clock this morning, and then the chairman reported progress.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 1793.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he had a petition to present from the upper servants of the city of Dublin, complaining of the great inundation of foreign servants, and praying relief; but, on account of some informality in point of signature, he did not present it.

On the second reading of Lord Belmore's divorce bill, the SPEAKER observed, that in cases of bills of divorce, he understood the practice in the British House of Commons was, that evidence was produced at the bar of the House, as well as in the House of Lords; and as bills of divorce were of the greatest consequence, he thought it but proper to submit this to the House.

Mr. FORBES said, the constant practice in the English House of Commons, was to produce evidence in both Houses, and the House ought to act with great precaution in passing bills of divorce; besides the dignity of Parliament was very materially interested; evidence would be produced at the bar, and though, in the present case, there was an English verdict, and a decision of an English ecclesiastical court; yet if there was an Irish verdict, and a decision of an Irish ecclesiastical court, he should still insist for the dignity of Parliament, to have evidence produced at the bar. However his feelings might be inclined, he contended that the producing of evidence at the bar of this House, was indispensably necessary in cases of bills of divorce.

The bill was committed for Monday se'nnight.

Mr. FORBES declared he should object to the bill, if evidence was not brought to the bar.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY begged leave to call the attention of the House for a short time: He had mentioned,

some time ago, his intentions on the subject of a parliamentary reform, and before he should sit down he should move for leave to bring in a bill, for amending and improving the state of the representation of the people in Parliament. He was aware that no perfect plan of reform could be proposed, or a plan that several objections might not be made against. He said, it seemed to be the general wish of the people, that there should be an additional number of members for the counties, and the principle of the bill went to that object. Another object, which seemed to be generally desired, that members for boroughs should be returned by a greater number of suffrages than they are at present, and his idea was, persons residing within a district of three or four miles of the place, where the last corporation business was transacted, who possessed a freehold of twenty pounds, should be entitled to vote in such boroughs; also, that persons from birth or service should be entitled to vote.

He did not intend to meddle with existing charters; he intended to propose in this bill an oath, which he considered as a very essential act to verify, that the person returned to serve in Parliament did not purchase his seat. He should make that oath very strong; these were the outlines of what he intended to introduce into the bill; and he hoped, that at the next meeting, he should be able to lay it before the House. He then moved for leave to bring in a bill for amending and improving the state of the representation of the people in Parliament.

After a short observation from Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE, leave was given, and ordered that Mr. WILLIAM B. PONSONBY and Mr. CONNOLLY do prepare and bring in the same.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that he had mentioned, the other day, that he should submit a motion relative to some proceedings had under the gunpowder act; since he gave that notice he was informed that the matter was likely to be adjusted. I have, said he, this day received intelligence from one of the corps, that there was an order to restore their cannon, and that the corps was satisfied. I hope that the same disposition in Government to accommodate, will take place in similar cases and circumstances; the ground of my motion is, therefore, withdrawn.

The House adjourned to Monday the 18th.

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 1793.

A petition of the upper servants, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and all the upper servants, natives of the kingdom of Ireland, was presented to the House by Mr. GRATTAN, and read; setting forth, that petitioners, impressed with the deepest sensibility for the many favours they

have experienced from the several noblemen and gentlemen, they have had the honour to serve in the several degrees of upper servants, humbly presume to approach the House, and with great humility to state many grievances and distresses, which they and men in their situations have for a long time suffered, and which are daily increasing, and will be the ruin of petitioners and their families; that petitioners have always to the best of their skill and abilities, which they humbly conceive are not inferior to those of foreigners, discharged the several duties attending their several situations in life, and have always been true and faithful to their respective employers, whose interest they have always considered as their own, and that it is their indispensable duty to support it, and whose esteem they have diligently endeavoured to obtain, and shall always think themselves happy in acquiring it; that petitioners have for many years seen, with patient anxiety, great numbers of Frenchmen and other foreigners constantly resorting to this kingdom; many of whom have, in all probability, been obliged to leave their native country from misconduct, or a breach of the laws under which they were born; and their general resource, in this country, is to insinuate themselves into the houses and employment of gentlemen of fortune in this country, to the great danger of such gentlemen, as a knowledge of their correspondence and papers, may be obtained by insinuating and designing men, who may betray them to their connections, or private employers in France and other countries; that such men being, in general, in low circumstances and mere adventurers, they use every means to accomplish their intentions, and pretend to be masters of the different duties, attending any employment that they can discover a man is wanting in, in any family of opulence and consequence in this country, and in such their designs they are supported by every art, insinuation and contrivance of their countrymen; that there are at present great numbers of Frenchmen and other foreigners, in the station of upper servants in such families, and their numbers are daily increasing so as to alarm petitioners with approaching poverty and distress, as many of petitioners have already spent most of their lives, and others their younger years, in the faithful discharge of the duties of their situations, and have no trade or profession to turn to for the support of themselves and families, and will have no resource to support a wretched existence in the decline of life; that the consequences attending the admission of such foreigners, into the stations of upper servants in said families, and of their contrivances to keep natives of this country out of said families, in order to bring in their own countrymen and associates, have been the cause of reducing natives of this country and their families to the greatest distress, and which has often been attended with fatal consequences to them; that numbers of natives of the best abilities in their respective situations, being by the aforesaid

means kept out of employment, without the means of earning a livelihood, have been obliged to depend upon the friendship and humanity of such of petitioners as have been in employment, for such scanty pittance as was in the power of such humane persons to afford them for their relief, and it has often happened that many well disposed and honest men being for so long a time kept out of employment, by the resort of such numbers of foreigners, that they have exhausted the means that were in the power of such humane persons to relieve them, and their patience being worn out and poverty pressing hard upon them, they have at last, from necessity, been obliged to pursue unlawful means to prevent themselves and families from starving, and often are brought to an untimely death; and were it not for such numbers of foreigners, such persons would have fulfilled the duties of just and faithful servants, and be useful members of society; that petitioners compose a large body of his Majesty's subjects, and have always been amenable to the laws, and have conducted themselves peaceably and quietly upon all occasions, and declare themselves to be as sincerely attached to the laws of this country as any body or number of men, and will continue to be of the same disposition; and are induced to trouble the House, merely from the hardships petitioners have already suffered, and which are likely to increase, to the utter ruin of petitioners and their families, unless the House will humanely interpose; and therefore praying relief.

It was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. HAYES presented to the House, according to order, a bill for the better preservation of public roads, by the encouragement of waggons, and regulation of carriages travelling on the same; which was received and read the first time.

An engrossed bill for further amending the several laws for making, widening and repairing the road from Dublin to Malahide, and the other roads leading to Dublin over Ballybough-bridge, and for enabling the trustees for the said purposes to borrow a further sum to complete a new communication eastward of Ballybough-bridge, was read a third time, and passed.

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1793.

Mr. M'CLEMENT moved that it be an instruction to the committee of the whole House, to whom is referred the consideration of Lord Belmore's divorce bill, to hear counsel and evidence at the bar, in support of the allegations of the bill.—Ordered accordingly.

The House, according to order, resolved itself into committee on said bill; Mr. ANNESLEY in the chair.

Mr. Burston and the Recorder, counsel for Lord Belmore, attended at the bar. Mr. Burston informed the committee, that he should proceed to produce evidence in support of the bill.

The first witness produced was Lord Enniskillen, who proved his being present at the marriage of Lord and Lady Belmore, and that they cohabited afterwards, and that there was a daughter by the marriage; and for these several years past they had not lived together.

Charles King, Esq; proved his being a subscribing witness to the marriage settlement between Lord and Lady Belmore, and that Lord Buckinghamshire was a party to that settlement;—the settlement was dated the 10th of March, 1780; that they cohabited together for better than a year. He proved also there being a deed of separation executed between Lord and Lady Belmore, dated the 15th of June, 1781; and that in a few days after, Lady Belmore left Ireland, and, to the best of his belief and knowledge, she and Lord Belmore never cohabited afterwards.

The sentence of the Ecclesiastical Court of the diocese of London was given in evidence.

As was also the judgment of the court of King's Bench in England, obtained by Lord Belmore against the Earl of Ancram for *crim con.* with Lady Belmore.

Jannette Thoure, a French woman, who was the waiting woman of Lady Belmore, was examined through the medium of an interpreter. She proved that on the 10th of December, 1791, Lady Belmore cohabited with Lord Ancram at a place called the Rochelet, within six miles of Calais; that she lived with her as her waiting woman; they cohabited together as Lord and Lady Ancram.—She proved her having seen them in bed together.

Another witness proved having seen Lord Ancram and Lady Belmore, both of whom he knew, at Calais, on the 9th of December, 1791, and that they lived together as man and wife, and passed as Lord and Lady Ancram.

After the witnesses were examined, Major DOYLE moved, that the counsel should withdraw, and that the chairman should make his report to the House. The bill was then gone through, and on the House being resumed, it was reported forthwith, read a third time, passed, and sent back to the Lords without any amendment.

Reported the militia bill, with several amendments; and the bill ordered to be engrossed.

On this subject Mr. VANDELEUR spoke nearly as follows :

Mr. Speaker—the bill has now proceeded so far as to secure to Government an additional force of 16,000 men to our present military establishment, this immense augmentation must incur a very great and heavy expence on the country, and the Administration in calling it forth, will act with that discretion which the situation of the revenues of this country so peculiarly require ; if either foreign enemies or domestic insurrections threaten the peace of the kingdom, Government are well authorized to encrease the establishments by the force entrusted to them by this act ; but, I trust, if that be not the case, they will not wantonly put such an additional expence on the country, with its revenues and its credit in a state of decline. The expence of the militia, if embodied for one year, will be 408,000*l.*—The encrease of the army already voted is 164,000*l.* The ordnance will be 94,000*l.* To this must be added the arrears on the establishments, which in the half year, ending Michaelmas, encreased 162,000*l.* Now if it has encreased this last half year in the same proportion, which the state of the revenues gives us every reason to suppose it has, the arrear will be 324,000*l.* encrease within the year ; this arrear must in some time be paid off—particularly when the arrear of the civil establishment at Christmas amounted to 151,000*l.* and now is equal to one year's establishment, part of this justice requires should be discharged ;—the officers of the barrack board are one year in arrear, and the pensions, except to the royal family, are six quarters unpaid. Those several sums amount to about 1,000,000*l.* which must be borrowed, and as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has already been obliged to pay five per cent. it is not probable that the larger sum being thrown into the market will lessen the rate of interest ;—this will require a permanent charge on the public of 50,000*l.* per annum. The people will grant it liberally when required. Government I hope, will expend it with œconomy and prudence, and when they demand it, they will bring forward some solid and efficient plan of œconomy and retrenchment, which can be applied in every department of the State. There is another defalcation of revenue in the *bonus* of the lottery, of 57,000*l.* which certainly cannot be attributed to the honourable baronet, because the robbery of the lottery affected so much its credit, that people would not venture to speculate in it, and all competition failed, but so much must be deducted from the current revenue of the year. I now, Sir, wish to know from the honourable gentleman, if it be the intention of Administration to call out the whole or a part of the militia, and how they intend to provide for the support of this new military establishment.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER animadverted on the inconsistency of conduct of the honourable gentleman. He had

voted for the bill, and now that it was almost in its last stage, he disapproved of the measure. He trusted that the measure now about to be adopted would tend, in a great measure, to restore the public credit and the revenues of the country. He did not at all despair but this country would be, ere long, in such a situation as to have a great encrease of revenue, and its public credit upon the most respectable footing. He did not mean to propose any loan; but his intention was to move for a vote of credit from the House, as was the case in the Spanish armament; at that time 200,000*l.* was voted, but only 50,000*l.* was borrowed; and whatever sum was borrowed, its application would be accounted for to Parliament; and, instead of borrowing a million, as the honourable gentleman had mentioned, he trusted that we should not have occasion to borrow 300,000*l.*

After a few words from Mr. GRATTAN, the conversation ended.

Mr. BUSHE moved for leave to bring in a bill to empower certain persons to carry on the navigation of the river Nore.—Leave given.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY gave notice, that after the recess he should submit to the consideration of the House, a proposition respecting the commerce of this country in regard to the East India trade; and also a proposition respecting the commerce of this country in regard to the act of navigation.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD moved for leave to bring in a revenue bill. Leave granted.

Read a third time, and passed, the bill for repairing the road from Newcastle to the city of Limerick, and from thence to the city of Cork; also the militia bill.

A petition of Denis Bingham was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the bays, harbours or havens called Broad Haven and Black Harbour, otherwise commonly called and known by the name of Blackfod Bay, both situate on the North-west part of the county of Mayo, are separated from each other by a neck or isthmus of land, wherein, amongst other lands in the said county, the petitioner is seized of an estate of inheritance; that the navigation at and about those parts of the coasts of this kingdom from Ackill Head in the said county in and towards the bay or harbour of Killala, is very dangerous, and ships and other vessels navigating in those parts are necessitated, by means of the many capes and headlands, to stand out from the coast, to the great protraction of their voyages; all which circuitous course of one hundred miles or thereabouts may be avoid-

ed; that the completing of a cut or channel across the said isthmus of land, so as to form a junction between the said harbours of Broad Haven to the said harbour of Blackfod, would be a work of great national utility, by preserving the lives and properties of many of his Majesty's subjects; and therefore praying relief.

The petition was referred to a committee.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 1793.

After some cursory business the ATTORNEY GENERAL called the attention of the House to a matter which he conceived materially affected the privileges of Parliament. He held in his hand a newspaper of Saturday last, entitled, "The Rights of Irishmen, or National Evening Star"—printed by one Randall M'Allister. In which, among other articles, was inserted one under the head of "Political Dictionary"—in which, among other political definitions, that House was described as a public market, where honour and virtue were exposed to sale, and sold to the highest bidder. This, he observed, was one of the grossest libels ever promulged against the dignity of the House of Commons;—and he therefore moved, that Randall M'Allister do attend to-morrow at the bar of the House.

Ordered accordingly.

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 1793.

Sir EDWARD CROFTON presented a bill for securing the freedom of parliament, by ascertaining the qualification necessary to enable persons to sit and vote therein. Read a first time.

The order of yesterday, for Randal M'Allister, printer of the National Evening Star, to attend this day at the bar of the House being read; and the SPEAKER desiring to know if Mr. M'Allister attended, the Serjeant at Arms informed the House he did not.

The messenger was then called, who informed the House, that he left a notice at Mr. M'Allister's on Wednesday evening, between six and seven o'clock—that he did not see Mr. M'Allister himself, but served the notice upon a person who acts as his clerk.

Hereupon the Serjeant at Arms was directed to take Mr. M'Allister into custody.

The bill for improvement of barren land, was read a third time, and passed.

A petition of the subscribers for perfecting the navigation of the river Nore from the tide water below the bridge of Innistioige to the city of Kilkenny, by making towing paths on its banks, by collateral canals, and whatsoever also may be necessary in carrying forward the said navigation through the towns of Innistioige, Thomastown and Bennet's-Bridge, and through the baronies of Shellilogher and Gowran, in the county of Kilkenny, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners have lately caused plans to be made for executing the said navigation, and likewise estimates of the expense of carrying it into effect, by which it appears the amount will be thirty thousand pounds; that the petitioners are willing to undertake the execution of the said navigation from the tide water below the bridge of Innistioige to the city of Kilkenny, to be completed in six years from the first day of July, in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three, on receiving an aid of one-third of their expenditure, viz. of ten thousand pounds, being one-third of the estimate; that the petitioners do not require to receive any part of the aid except as they shall prove before the commissioners of imprest accounts from time to time the expenditure of their own money; and then they humbly hope to receive a sum equal to one-half of what they shall thus prove to be expended, so as in the end to receive one-third of their whole expenditure; that the petitioners, in consideration of the said aid, do not propose to exceed a toll of three-half-pence per ton per mile on coals, culm, lime, and all mines and minerals, and two-pence per ton per mile on all other articles; and therefore praying aid.

The petition was referred to a committee.

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 1793.

Mr. GRAYDON moved for leave to bring in a bill for the establishment of a musical society for charitable purposes. Leave given.

He presented the bill; which was read a first time.

Mr. Cockburne's private bill from the Lords, was read a third time and passed as also; the bill for the better regulation of the baking trade.

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 1793.

The Usher of the Black Rod appeared at the bar, and summoned the House to attend the Lord Lieutenant in the House of

Peers; to which the Speaker and several members accordingly repaired; and being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported that the House had attended his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers; where his Excellency was pleased to give the royal assent to the bills following:

PUBLIC BILLS.

1. An act for granting for one year the several duties therein mentioned, in lieu of all other duties payable upon the articles therein specified during the said term, and for continuing the effect of the treaty of commerce and navigation signed at Versailles on the 26th day of September, 1786, between his Majesty and the most Christian King, and for regulating the trade between this kingdom and his Majesty's colonies, and for other purposes therein mentioned.

2. An act for regulating and extending the tobacco trade.

3. An act for securing the payment of the annuities and of the interest upon the principal sums therein provided for, and towards the discharge of such principal sums in such manner as therein is directed, and for enabling the officers of his Majesty's treasury to receive certain sums for a limited time in manner therein mentioned, and for other purposes.

4. An act for granting to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, certain duties and rates upon the portage and conveyance of all letters and packets within this kingdom.

5. An act for regulating the payment of bounties on the exportation of certain manufactures of this kingdom.

6. An act for regulating the allowance of the drawback and payment of the bounty on the exportation of sugar.

7. An act for punishing mutiny and desertion, and for the better payment of the army and their quarters within this kingdom.

8. An act for granting to his Majesty, his heirs and successors, several duties therein mentioned; to be levied by the commissioners for managing the stamp duties.

9. An act for granting the several sums therein mentioned for certain pious and charitable purposes.

10. An act for the encouragement of seamen and marines employed in the royal navy, by rendering it more easy to petty officers and seamen, non-commissioned officers of marines and marines to remit their wages to this kingdom, and by providing for the payment in this kingdom of wages due to deceased officers, seamen and marines, as aforesaid.

11. An act for further continuing an act, entitled, an act for facilitating the trade and intercourse between this kingdom and the United States of America.

12. An act for repairing the road leading from the town of Castlecomer, in the county of Kilkenny, to the city of Kilkenny.

MONDAY, MARCH 25, 1793.

The House met, but no business was done.

TUESDAY, MARCH 26, 1793.

Curfory business, but no debate: the House, at its rising, adjourned to Tuesday the 9th of April.

TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 1793.

A petition of the brewers and distillers of the city of Dublin, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that notwithstanding the present very plentiful season of barley, and the export of that article being totally prevented, the petitioners are much aggrieved by the extraordinary high price of barley and malt and the very bad quality of the latter; that the exorbitant increase in the price of barley does not in any degree tend to enrich the farmer or benefit the landed interest of this kingdom, but is engrossed by persons who practice the forestalling of that article; that barley and malt are articles of very considerable consumption, the annual sale of which, in the city of Dublin only (as the petitioners are credibly informed and believe) amounts to the vast sum of 600,000*l.* and the factors commission thereon to upwards of 24,000*l.*; that large quantities of barley, on which bounty has been obtained in Dublin, have frequently been re-shipped to the country, and brought back in malt, and a second bounty had thereon, which practice, as the petitioners humbly conceive, militates against the spirit of the bounty laws, and evidently tends to create an artificial scarcity, by throwing into the hands of monopolizers the corn intended for the supply of the petitioners; that unmerchantable malt, not screened or cleaned, is daily found to obtain bounty, contrary, as the petitioners humbly apprehend, to the intention of the said laws, by which the factor was formerly obliged to prove upon oath, that the malt for which bounty was demanded had been duly manufactured, but said necessary and proper restriction was left out of the bounty act in the year 1785; and now by so granting bounty for bad malt the improvement of

the manufacture of that article is much neglected, to the very great injury of the petitioners; that by the present bounty laws no malt, barley, or other grain that is not sold in Dublin by a licensed factor can obtain bounty by which the petitioners are prohibited from obtaining bounty, on any malt, barley or other grain brought to Dublin for their own consumption, except it passes through the hands of such factor, and which is found to be very prejudicial to the petitioners; that the malt of several maltsters is brought to Dublin mixed indiscriminately in the hold of one vessel, the best sort being always put uppermost, and by a sample drawn from the top of the cargo the whole is sold, and when delivered is frequently found to be not near so good as the sample; the petitioners humbly beg leave to state to the House, that the want of an established market or place for the sale of barley and malt brought to Dublin coastways, occasions many great inconveniencies to the petitioners, and that therefore these articles are frequently sold by false samples; the petitioners labouring under the several grievances before-mentioned, submit their distressed situation to the House, and humbly pray that enquiry may be made therein, and into the several frauds now existing relative thereto, and that such restrictions and regulations may be adopted in the manufacturing of malt, the mode of obtaining the bounty thereon, and in the sale of barley and malt, as will relieve and protect the petitioners in future.

The petition was referred to the consideration of a committee.

Mr. DENIS BOWES DALY presented a bill for the regulation of members to serve in Parliament, and for repealing the several acts of Parliament therein mentioned; which bill was read a first time.

The Usher of the Black Rod having summoned the House to attend the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers, the Speaker with several members, repaired thither; from whence being returned,

Mr. SPEAKER reported that the House had attended his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers, where his Excellency was pleased to give the royal assent the bills following:

PUBLIC BILLS.

1. An act for granting to his Majesty for one year the duties therein-mentioned on fire hearths, in lieu of all duties payable on the same prior to or during the said term.
2. An act for granting the sum of 4000*l.* to the trustees of the linen and hempen manufactures, and for other purposes.
3. An act for granting the sum of 5000*l.* to the Dublin Society, for the purposes therein-mentioned.

4. An act to prevent insurance of lottery tickets, to regulate the drawing of lotteries, and to amend the laws respecting the same.

5. An act for amending and reducing into one act of Parliament, the laws relating to a militia in Ireland.

6. An act for the relief of his Majesty's Popish or Roman Catholic subjects of Ireland.

7. An act for confirming, amending and enlarging the powers vested in the corporation for promoting and carrying on the Newry navigation.

8. An act for continuing and amending the several acts for making, widening and repairing the road leading from the town of Newcastle, in the county of Limerick, to the city of Limerick, and from thence to the bounds of the counties of Limerick and Cork, between the towns of Kilmallock and Charleville, and to continue an act passed in the twenty-eighth year of his present Majesty, entitled, an act to continue and amend an act passed in the fifth year of his late Majesty's reign, entitled, an act for repairing the road leading from the town of Newcastle, in the county of Limerick, to the city of Limerick, and from thence to the city of Cork.

PRIVATE BILLS.

1. An act to dissolve the marriage of Armar Lowry, Lord Viscount Belmore, with Henrietta Lady Viscountess Belmore his now wife, and to enable him to marry again.

2. An act for confirming and establishing certain articles of agreement made between the trustees named and appointed by the last will and testament of Richard Morgan, late of Newcastle, in the county of Dublin, Esq; deceased, and John Godley, of the city of Dublin, Esq; the nephew and heir at law of the said Richard Morgan, concerning the real and personal estates whereof Richard Morgan died seized and possessed, and for other purposes.

3. An act to confirm and establish an agreement of compromise between George Cockburne and John Hussey, Esqrs. touching the lordships, manors, towns and lands of Rathkenny, Droiminstown otherwise Drumstown, Milltown and Clogher, with their and every of their appurtenances; and also the towns and lands of Galtrim, Boyestown, Rathgowney, otherwise Rathgowly, Galtstown, Kenaghstown, Baltrafna, Lennahstown, otherwise Lynanstown, Haynestown, Ryanhunt, otherwise Raheenhunt and Cawaghstown, with their and every of their appurtenances, and to extinguish the claim of George Cockburne and all other persons whatsoever in or to the said lands, claiming or to claim by, from or under George Cockburne, late of the city of Dublin, Esq; deceased.

Mr. CORRY. said, that in consequence of a publication, which he had seen, by accident, since the last sitting of the House, he was induced to trouble them with a few words. He found, that in the newspaper which he held in his hand, a speech, published as made by him, which stated matter which would have been totally false, in point of fact, had it fallen from him, and which he, therefore, took that opportunity of correcting. It was, he said, upon the subject of the Roman Catholic bill, on which the speech began by stating him to have said, that he attended at a public meeting in the county wherein he resided; whereas the fact is, he had never attended any county meeting, whatsoever, upon the subject of the Roman Catholic bill, and that the publication was in every other respect equally unfounded. He said, so far was the publication from being founded, in attributing that speech to him, that he did not recollect, except so far as to give Roman Catholics the right of voting in potwalloping boroughs, he had ever made any speech upon the subject, and his reason for not having spoke upon it was this, that the bill in favour of the Roman Catholics was a measure which had throughout his most hearty concurrence; and as that measure had not stood in need of any support from him, he had not thought it necessary to take any part upon it in that House; not choosing to run a race for popularity with that body of men, at a time when they had no occasion for his assistance; but which assistance, had it been necessary they most certainly should have had.

He said, that from the terms of the speech, he conjectured, so soon as he saw it, that it had been intended for that of an honourable friend of his, which he since found to be the fact. He said, that he noticed this publication, not with any intention of making severe strictures on the publisher, but with a view to make such persons more cautious in the like publications in future, as well as to set right facts, which had, very naturally, created a good deal of surprise amongst his friends, and which, as set forth in that publication, is totally unfounded.

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH observed, that several members of the House, had been put under fees to some of the officers of that House, for being absent on the days for balloting for committees on controverted elections, and wished to know if the orders had been complied with. He believed not, in many instances, which was a great injury to the officers, by depriving them of their lawful fees. He would say no more, at present, on this subject; but at the next meeting of the House, he would move for a list of all the defaulters; and then he would move that they, individually, should be ordered to attend in their places, when he did not doubt but they would give good reasons why they had not paid their fees.

The House then adjourned to Tuesday the 30th of April.

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1783.

After cursory business, the ATTORNEY GENERAL informed the House, that Randal M'Allister, who had been ordered into custody of the Serjeant at Arms, had been apprehended, and was then in the House. He moved that he be ordered to the bar.

Mr. M'Allister was then brought to the bar in custody. In answer to some interrogatories from the ATTORNEY GENERAL, he acknowledged that he was printer of the Rights of Irishmen, or National Evening Star, on the 16th of March last, and that a paper which was shewn him, containing the paragraph for which he was in custody, was published at his office.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then read the paragraph, the purport of which was, "That the House of Commons was a public market, in which honour, integrity, and patriotism, were sold to the highest bidder." He then moved, "that this paragraph was a gross libel on that House, and a violation of its privileges." Agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. M'Allister was asked, what he had to say in his defence? He answered, that the paragraph had been thrown into his letter-box as an article of intelligence; that it purported to be an extract from a work published in England, called Pearson's Dictionary; that the paragraph had been published in his absence; that he would not have published it had he known it contained a libel on that House, and that he was extremely sorry for having given them any cause of offence.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL observed, that this was one of the most strange apologies he had ever heard: a man publishes a paper, professing as its sole object the preservation of his countrymen's rights, and yet will insert in it any libel, however gross, on the laws and legislature of his country, provided it be thrown into his letter box as an article of intelligence. He should therefore move, that Mr. Randal M'Allister be committed to his Majesty's gaol of Newgate, and in doing so, he was convinced he was making a motion strongly tending to preserve inviolate the privileges of that House, and the liberty of the press. For however trite the remark was, it could not be too often inculcated, that nothing can possibly destroy the liberty of the press in these countries but its licentiousness; that licentiousness was now grown to a degree of exorbitance unequalled in any age or country; and it should be the object of every man who wished well to the press, or to the liberty of his country, which it ought to protect, to restrain that licentiousness.

After a few words from Colonel BLAQUIERE, in support of the motion, it passed *nem. con.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, it was with regret he rose to move for leave to bring in a bill relative to a species of crime, which he found in the discharge of his duty, as a law officer of the crown, was become prevalent to an alarming degree: the crime he alluded to was that of conspiracy to commit murder. It was become frequent throughout many parts of the kingdom, but particularly in the county of Louth, where several conspiracies to hire assassins to dispatch men who had distinguished themselves, by their exertions to keep the public peace, were known to have been formed, and in some instances had unfortunately been successful.

He mentioned two instances: one of Mr. Morgan, who was murdered in consequence of a regular conspiracy formed against him; the other of a Mr. Pentland, a revenue officer, who had also been put to death, by assassins hired for the purpose, by a set of men who had conspired against him.

Another instance of conspiracy, which, however, was not successful, was an attempt made on the life of Captain M'Neal, a man to whom the highest praise was due for his singular exertions to preserve public peace. By the law as it now stood, this crime was but a misdemeanor; it deserved to be ranked among more atrocious offences; he therefore moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent the horrid crime of conspiring to commit murder.

Leave was given.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL, also, moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal so much of the act which passed last session of Parliament, for confirming the powers of the Society of the King's Inns, and to bring in a bill for regulating the same.

Leave was also given.

The Hon. Mr. ANNESLEY presented a petition from a person, who, notwithstanding that he had in his possession a summons from a sitting committee of that House, which should have given him the protection of parliamentary privilege, was arrested for debt by a sheriff's officer, and remained ever since in durance.

The petition was received, and ordered to lie on the table.

The House adjourned to Tuesday the 28th day of May.

TUESDAY, MAY 28, 1793.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL presented the following message from the Lord Lieutenant:

" WESTMORLAND,

" An application having been made to me during the recess of Parliament, from the merchants of the city of Dublin, on the 6th of May instant, representing that the depressed state of public credit has extended itself so as seriously to affect the trade and manufactures of this kingdom; and it appearing to me that immediate relief was absolutely necessary, I took such measures thereupon as appeared to me essential, and I have directed the same to be laid before you, with a perfect confidence that you will take such measures thereupon, as, in your judgment, shall be requisite on this important and critical occasion.

" W."

The message was ordered to be entered on the Journals.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then presented the papers alluded to in the message; they consisted of the address of the merchants, the proceedings of the Privy Council thereupon, and their recommendation.

They were received; and on the motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, were referred to a committee of the whole House, who are to sit on Friday next.

The House then having no business before them, adjourned until next day.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 1793.

Mr. PERY presented a bill for the settlement of the estate of John Tuthill, Esq; of Limerick as therein mentioned; which was read a first time.

Mr. Finucane's divorce bill was read a third time, and passed.

THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1793.

After some cursory business was gone through, the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER apologized to the House for

his absence the last two days; he had hoped to have been here at the opening on Tuesday last, but was detained in London on public business. He said, he hoped the Secretary would be here to-morrow; that he had been very active in the British House for the service of this country, in bringing forward there some bills, which, it is hoped, would essentially serve Ireland, and waited until they had passed; but expected he might leave London as yesterday. He adverted to the great decay of public credit and public trade; and as he feared that some diffidence arose from the uncertainty of what farther supplies might be wanted for public service, he wished the committee of supply might sit to-morrow, as he thought it would be best fairly and openly to lay before the House what might be necessary to be raised, and satisfy the public mind. He therefore moved, that the House do, to-morrow, resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into farther consideration the supply granted to his Majesty. This was carried *nem. con.*

Mr. FORBES moved, that the proper officer do lay before the House, the gross amount of the hereditary revenue, the additional revenue, and the receipt of the stamp-office and post-office, for the three months ending the 25th of last March.

Sir HERCULES LANGRISH said, he feared that this order could not be complied with, so as to be satisfactory to the honourable gentlemen; for all the collectors' accounts had not been examined and passed.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER added, that the accounts for the quarter ending last March could not be returned with a precise accuracy; but if the gentleman would call for the quarter ending last Christmas, that could be got perfectly accurate; and would give the House three months more information than was then before it, as it had only the returns to last Michaelmas. And if it pleased Mr. Forbes, he would give in a rough account of the quarter to March, without the formality of any order; and that account, he believed, would be nearly just.

Mr. FORBES then moved for the accounts to Christmas; which were ordered.

Mr. GRATTAN said, as he understood the House was to go, to-morrow, into a committee on his Excellency's message, respecting public credit, and the steps he and the Privy Council had taken towards restoring it, though he did not doubt, nay, was assured, that every thing done was extremely proper, yet he thought it would be formal and regular, for the committee to have before them the same evidence as had been given before the

Privy Council, on which the Lord Lieutenant and Council had proceeded.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL agreed with the propriety, and made a motion accordingly; upon which it was

Ordered, that Mr. William Cope, merchant, Mr. Abraham Wilkinson, governor of the bank of Ireland; Messrs. John Patrick, John Comerford, Shaw and O'Brien, merchants, be desired to attend the committee to-morrow.

FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1793.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a bill for establishing certain regulations respecting a nightly watch in the city of Dublin, and to discontinue the appointment of commissioners and divisional justices of police.

Read the first time, and ordered to be read again on Thursday next.

Leave given, on the motion of Mr. FORBES, to bring in a bill to provide for the wives and families of such as shall be drawn for the militia.

The House went into a committee on the Lord Lieutenant's message, when Messrs. Abraham Wilkinson, and John Patrick were examined. The committee then unanimously resolved, that the well timed interposition of his Excellency to support public credit, was necessary and highly beneficial; and it was ordered, in consequence, that the sums advanced by the bank of Ireland shall be made good by the House, with interest at five per cent.

A petition of Nicholas Grimshaw, Robert Sterling, Thomas Millikin and James Dickey, on behalf of themselves and other cotton manufactures resident in the town and neighbourhood of Belfast, was presented to the House, and read; setting forth, that the manufactures carried on by the petitioners give employment to many thousands of poor and industrious people; that the situation of the petitioners is such that they cannot continue their manufactures without aid, owing to the impossibility of immediately raising on their property the sums necessary for the pressure of the moment; that the petitioners came to Dublin in the expectation of procuring some share of the aid of 200,000*l.* already granted by government by way of loans on good security; that the petitioners have made known their claims to the commissioners appointed for the distribution of the said sum of 200,000*l.* but have been disappointed of receiving that aid which they require, not as petitioners believe from any doubt of the

security offered by petitioners, but from said securities not being resident in the city of Dublin, which is a kind of security that can be obtained in few cases by country manufacturers; that the petitioners beg leave to submit to the wisdom of the House how far the good intention of extending relief to the distressed manufacturers of the town and neighbourhood of Belfast might be answered by appropriating a certain sum to be lent out by commissioners resident in Belfast, whose local situation puts in their power the means of knowing better the necessities of the claimants and the sufficiency of the securities by them offered; that the petitioners humbly conceive that by such a plan the end proposed might be better answered, and such part of the kingdom as merited assistance be likely to obtain it, which by the mode adhered to in the distribution of the 200,000*l.* is rendered in most cases unattainable by the difficulty in such times as these, of procuring securities in Dublin; the petitioners humbly pray that the House will be pleased to consider that the town and neighbourhood of Belfast is the seat of the greatest cotton manufacture in Ireland, that the beneficence of Government is not likely to extend to the kingdom at large, by confining the security to residents in Dublin; and the petitioners humbly conceive that the utility and wisdom of the measure adopted by Government at this critical juncture cannot be effectually carried into execution while the commissioners confine themselves to Dublin security; the petitioners humbly pray the House may take their case into consideration, and grant them such immediate relief as shall seem meet; petitioners, in support of their allegation herein contained, humbly beg leave to call the attention of the House to a circumstance which has already taken place, to wit, the commissioners already appointed for the appropriation of the 200,000*l.* laid aside, at an early period in the business, the sum of 30,000*l.* for the relief of the manufacturers of Belfast and its neighbourhood, on condition that eight of the most respectable men resident there would come forward as sub-commissioners for the dividing of said sum of 30,000*l.* and be responsible for the repayment of said grant, but this measure, to the great inconvenience of the petitioners and many others, was rendered abortive by the difficulty of procuring eight men who would take the trouble of dividing this money, and at the same time be actually bound for the repayment thereof.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he agreed perfectly in the principle that the relief designed for distressed manufacturers should extend to every part of the kingdom, and to him it appeared, that this was the idea of the commissioners also, since they had agreed, as the petition stated, to grant a sum of 30,000*l.*

to Belfast on the security of eight of the principal men of the town for the repayment.

He was decidedly against the idea suggested by the petition, of appointing commissioners in Belfast; for, if commissioners were appointed there, the same application would be made by every other manufacturing town in the kingdom; and the House could not refuse to them an indulgence which it had granted to Belfast. The present plan of relieving the manufacturers, was an imitation of that which had been adopted in England, and which had been found fully to answer its end. There no commissioners were appointed but those in London; it would be hazardous, he thought, to deviate from the line they had marked out. It was much more safe to trust the sum to be issued to the management of one set of men than to many; for they would be much more cautious in the securities they would take, than if the responsibility were divided among a variety of men in various parts of the country. The gentlemen who were appointed to preside over the distribution of this sum, had been chosen by his Excellency, not from any local or partial considerations, but because they were men of the first commercial eminence and character—and he was certain they would do every thing in their power, consistent with the security of the public; to accommodate the manufacturers of Belfast, or those of any other part of the kingdom.

Mr. O'NEIL said, that in presenting the petition, he did not think himself bound to justify its contents; he could not help saying, however, that the petition did not attempt in the slightest degree to impeach the conduct of the commissioners; it simply asserted, that the petitioners could not obtain a share of the sum destined for the relief of the manufacturers, without producing Dublin security, which it was highly inconvenient for men resident in the country to procure.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied, that the same mode would be adopted here for the convenience of country manufacturers which obtained in England, that of storing goods in warehouses set apart for the purpose, by way of security, till the repayment.

The PROVOST wished the commissioners to consider that men may commit their property as security for an individual or a number of individuals with whose circumstances they are acquainted, though they would by no means do so for a whole city. This, he thought, was the reason why the offer of the commissioners to Belfast had not been accepted.—The object of those gentlemen, he said, could only be, that the money they issued might be well secured; he therefore wished that they would be content with receiving good security from each person who might apply for mo-

ney for the sum he might receive, and not desire that a few individuals should commit themselves for a whole town.

Mr. CORRY conceived that the proposal of the commissioners to the people of Belfast was a departure from the common mode which the commissioners had been induced to make in their favour.—The common mode was, that goods to double the amount of the sum received should be deposited as a security; in favour of the manufacturers of Belfast the commissioners had agreed to dispense with the deposit, and to accept the security of eight men of consideration in the town. For himself, he bore testimony to the readiness of the commissioners to accommodate the people in the country.—In some instances he had made application for linen drapers, &c. in his neighbourhood, and had always found the commissioners prompt to comply with any reasonable request.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table, and referred to the committee appointed to take into consideration his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's message.

The House in committee on his Excellency's message; Mr. MASON in the chair.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he understood the merchants who had been yesterday ordered to attend the House were in waiting; he apprised gentlemen that he would ask of those persons only three questions:

Whether the measure that had been adopted was necessary?

Whether there would have been danger in delaying it till the meeting of Parliament? And

Whether it had been useful?

Mr. A. Wilkinson being then called in, the Chair asked,

Whether, at the time when the merchants made application to the Lord Lieutenant, there existed any difficulties which disabled them from turning their funds into negotiable securities?

Answered in the affirmative.

Q. Would it have been dangerous to delay the measure which his Excellency then adopted?

A. The measure would have certainly been less efficacious had it been delayed.

Q. Had that measure the desired effect?

A. It enabled some houses to go on.

Mr. FORBES asked, whether, in his opinion, the sum of 200,000*l.* was adequate to the exigencies of the occasion?

To which Mr. Wilkinson answered, "that hitherto it had been sufficient, for applications to that amount had not yet been made."

Mr. Patrick was then called in, whose answers corresponded with those of Mr. Wilkinson.

The evidence having withdrawn;

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER alluding to the question of Mr. Forbes, said, that though the sum destined for this purpose might be sufficient for the present crisis, yet as credit depended as much on opinion as fact, he thought it would be necessary, in order that the public might know their resource, to bring in a bill to enable Government at any future period, when it might be necessary, to issue whatever sum should, at the time, be requisite to be disposed of in a manner similar to the present.

As to the evidence which had been given, he thought it fully sufficient whereon to ground two resolutions; one in approbation of the measure, and to thank his Excellency for having adopted it; the other, to indemnify the bank for the sums which it might issue to the commissioners.

He then moved, "That it is the opinion of this committee, that the well-timed interposition of his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant in support of credit, was necessary, and has proved highly beneficial."

"That it is the opinion of this committee, that whatever sum or sums of money has been, or may be issued by the governors and company of the bank of Ireland to [the commissioners, naming them individually] not exceeding in the whole the sum of 200,000*l.* shall be made good by this House, with interest of 5*l.* per cent. per annum, from the time of issuing such sum or sums respectively."

Both these resolutions were agreed to unanimously; after which the House resumed, and ordered the report of the committee to be presented to-morrow.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1793.

Mr. MASON reported the resolutions of the committee of the whole House, to whom it was referred to take into consideration his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's message;—which were agreed to by the House.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, that an humble address of thanks be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, for his well-timed interposition in relieving the depressed state of public credit in this kingdom;—which was agreed to.

Mr. GRATTAN moved for leave to bring in a bill for the better securing the freedom of election of members of Parliament, by

disabling revenue officers from giving their votes at such elections.
—Leave was given.

Mr. O'HARA said, he wished to mention a subject to the House, which he had too long postponed. He had postponed it, hoping it might be brought forward by some person better able to carry it through the House. But as it might tend to prevent more ferment in this kingdom, if the public saw that due attention was likely to be paid to it, he would defer no longer to state it to the House.

He spoke of the militia, an establishment which he, at no time, thought well suited to this country, and against which he should have given his reasons had he been able to attend the earlier part of the session. At present, he apprehended the act could not be repealed, there being no instance of an act of parliament having been repealed the same session in which it had passed. But, under these circumstances, it was the duty of parliament to obviate, if possible, the ill effects of such parts of the act as had occasioned so much commotion. People dreaded giving in their names for the lists—they dreaded the ballot; many thought they could neither serve without great inconvenience, nor afford to provide a substitute.

In the counties where the militia had succeeded best, a sufficient number of persons had voluntarily offered their service first, and the ballot proceeded afterwards, merely in conformity to the act, no man being afraid of the ballot when he knew there were substitutes sufficient. The experiment pointed out the relief the House ought to give. Let a short act be passed, providing that where a sufficient number of persons offer their service voluntarily, those volunteers should be embodied, and that in such county there should be no lists made of the inhabitants, and no ballot. Though this would not be a militia, it would be easier to the county.

Such an act might include other provisions very satisfactory to the people, and necessary in such an institution—amongst these it might ascertain the pay, which had been omitted in the militia act. The true way would be, for the House to appoint a committee to consider of the subject, and point out proper measures to the House to be carried into effect by such an act.—Leave had been given yesterday to bring in a bill, which would do much towards procuring volunteers. The subject of that bill would be proper for such a committee. And if the necessity for lists and a ballot were once got over, it would save much trouble even in future; for by the present act, a ballot would from time to time be necessary to keep up the number of the militia. In short, if such a committee were to consider the subject fully, an act might be passed pursuant to the resolutions of the committee, substituting so much better regulations than those of the present law, as

would induce the House to repeal the militia act next session, though it could not do so this.

He assured the House this was not opposition to Government, far from it. It was merely a step he thought it necessary to take for the preservation of public peace. He meant to make no motion then, but rather to lay the subject before the House, that gentlemen might consider of it against such time as it probably would come forward, in a manner to call for their opinions.

The Hon. Mr. FOSTER presented a bill to provide for the families of persons chosen by lot to serve in the militia of this kingdom. It was read a first time.

Colonel BLAQUIERE moved, that the judges and revenue officers be exempted from serving in the militia.

The motion was objected to be entertained by the chair, as the SPEAKER said, that no motion could be received which goes to overthrow the law of the land.

Colonel BLAQUIERE then moved, that an entry on the Journals, of some words made use of in warmth by a noble lord, in a debate in the course of this session, be expunged.

This motion was not seconded; and the question of adjournment was immediately put, and carried.

MONDAY JUNE, 3, 1793.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, agreeably to the notice he had given, laid before the House the state of the finances. He recapitulated the various items which at the commencement of the session he enumerated, as constituting the sum wanted for the current expenditure of the year, amounting to the sum of

	£. 350,000
Of this the House had provided by loan for	200,000

Deficit, remaining to be provided for	150,000
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The revenue, he stated as having fallen so much that the deficiency for the year, which must also be provided for, could not be less than	100,000
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Total to be provided for under this head	250,000
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This sum, he informed the House, he would move for on the next day of sitting; but besides this sum an additional expence

must necessarily be incurred by the militia. The expence of ar-
ranging, added to a month's pay, as prescribed by the law, would
amount to about 160,000*l*. But, as it might possibly be thought
necessary to have them in service for a longer period than a
month, it might not be safe to estimate the whole of the expence
under this head, for the year, at less than - £. 300,000

Besides these, he said, there would remain no-
thing more to be provided for by the public,
but the sum which has been issued by the bank,
at the direction of the Lord Lieutenant, for
the support of public credit - - - 200,000

Of these sums, he gave notice that he would, on Wednesday
next, move for the first 250,000*l*. The expence of the militia
he would provide for, in the bill which would be brought in to
regulate their pay, by enabling Government to borrow such sums
as might be necessary for that purpose, until the permanent ex-
pence should be known, when it might be permanently provided
for by tax; those taxes, however, he said, whenever imposed,
should not be local taxes, confined to the particular places where
the militia should be raised, but should be general, so that the
burden should fall equally on the public at large.

If the House should agree to grant him those sums, they
should be the last, he promised, which he would call for this
year; and this he mentioned to relieve the public mind from
doubt, and to put an end to that fluctuation in the price of mo-
ney, which at present exists.

Mr. CONOLLY begged to ask a question. The right honour-
able baronet had stated very large sums, as necessary to be taken
from the public in their present low state. He was convinced
that in laying on those burdens, if they should be found necessary,
he would find as cheerful and ready acquiescence from the gentle-
men on that side of the House, as on his own: but must we,
said he, go on for ever in granting money to Government, and is
retrenchment never to take place? Must the management of the
House always cost the country so much?

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he would be
happy to answer the right honourable gentleman, if he knew
what expences he alluded to; but he did not understand him;
he knew not what he meant by the management of the House;
the sums he had mentioned were necessary for specific purposes,
which had received the sanction of Parliament; he never would
apply to that House for money for any other purposes, and
therefore the insinuations of the right honourable gentleman did
not apply to him.

Mr. CONOLLY thought he was very unfortunate in his application to the right honourable baronet; he could not, however, but applaud his prudence, and he was confident the friends of the right honourable baronet did so too. He knew very well his affection for the country; he knew his candour also; and he was confident that if he could have promised a reduction of expence, or held out the most distant hope of retrenchment, he would gladly have done so; his silence, therefore, he considered as a declaration that no retrenchment whatever was intended.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY observed, that from the statement of the right honourable baronet, it appeared that his demands on the country this year amount to 950,000*l.* viz.

Loan already granted	£. 200,000
New loan to be moved for	250,000
Militia	300,000
Sum issued for the support of mercantile credit	200,000
Total	950,000

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, this was the true statement, except that, as the 200,000*l.* issued to the merchants is to be repaid, it was unfair to consider it as a burden laid on the public, since, in fact, it was only money advanced, and which would be returned. The amount, then, of the sums needed for the year, would thus be only 750,000*l.* He meant, however, to propose that in addition to this, Government should be empowered to issue Exchequer bills to such amount as might be found requisite, in order at a future day, if it should be necessary, to support public credit in the same manner as at present.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY observed, that possibly the merchants would be able to repay the money, and he hoped they would; but that was a contingent of which no man could be sure, and for the present, the advance of it operated as much to the inconvenience of the public, as if it never were to be repaid.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER then moved, "that a committee be appointed to prepare an estimate of the clothing of the militia, and their pay for a month." This he thought was the usual way, and would enable him to state precisely to the House the necessary expence.—Ordered.

Mr. GRATTAN brought in his bill to disqualify revenue officers from voting at elections; which was read a first time.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY gave notice that he would, on Thursday next, bring in his promised bill for ascertaining the law of libels, and would move for its being read a second time on Saturday.

A message from his Excellency, desiring the attendance of the House in the House of Peers.

The SPEAKER having returned, informed the House that the royal assent had been given to the Malahide road bill, the barren land bill, and the bill for regulating the baking trade.

The PROVOST moved for leave to bring in a bill, for regulating the price at which coals shall be bought, to supply the public coal-yards of the city of Cork, and sold out of the same.—Leave granted. The bill was introduced forthwith, and read a first time. The House then adjourned to Wednesday next.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5, 1793.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved that the proper officer do lay before the House an estimate of the pay, &c. of the regiments of militia, according to the rate of pay and allowance of his Majesty's forces.—Ordered.

He then rose, agreeably to the notice which he had given on Monday, to move for a vote of 250,000*l.* He repeated to the House what he had said on that day in accounting for the necessity of this vote, stating that 150,000*l.* of it was a part of the sum which he had mentioned as necessary for the exigencies of Government at the commencement of the session, and which had not yet been provided for. The want of the remaining 100,000*l.* was occasioned by the defalcation of the revenue this year to this moment.

He concluded by moving, that it be referred to the committee of supply, that whatever sum or sums of money may be paid into his Majesty's treasury, not exceeding the sum of 250,000*l.* be applied by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, or the chief governor or governors for the time being, towards defraying the expences of Government; and that this House will make good the same with interest, &c.

Mr. GRATTAN, after paying some compliments to the candour and integrity of Sir John, observed, that there appeared some variations in this statement from that which he made to the House in February last.

At that time he stated the augmentation of the army, &c. at 100,000*l.* and the contingency of an encampment at 90,000*l.*; now he stated the augmentation at 150,000*l.*

At that time he stated the defalcation of revenue at 70,000*l.* but he did not propose to provide for that defalcation by loan, but to await the return of a more productive year. He now stated that defalcation at 100,000*l.* and proposes immediately to borrow money to provide for it.

The total then of his different claims on the public purse, at that time, fell short of 300,000*l.* He now came forward and called for 450,000*l.* of which 200,000*l.* had been already voted, and the other 250,000*l.* he now applied for.

These were very considerable variations, making the demands on the public greater by 70,000*l.* than they were in February last: there was another; the encampment which was estimated at 90,000*l.* was then mentioned as only a contingency which might, or might not, take place, as circumstances should require. It was now made part of the estimate as a thing granted. He hoped the right honourable baronet would account for these variations.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied—the increase in the present estimate arose from a very simple circumstance. A second augmentation had been thought necessary two days after the estimates of the first had been laid before the House: the expence of this, together with the estimates of the former augmentation, made up that which he now laid before them.

The same apology would suffice for the increase in the estimate of defalcation in revenue, namely, his not being able to foresee what was to happen. Gentlemen would see by the accounts of the produce of the revenue for the last three months, that within that period a very great defalcation had taken place; they would see, that within that time the revenue in the port of Dublin had not produced a single guinea to the treasury, the whole produce of it being scarcely sufficient to pay the officers. This, on examination, it would be found, was the true state of the revenue; and it would prove that the present estimates were so far from being extravagant, that he had not stated the wants of the country as extensively as he might have done.

It was with the House to determine, whether they would provide for this deficiency of 100,000*l.* or not; but certain he was, that they must either diminish their expences or provide for the defalcation. He knew but two ways of providing for it, by loan or by tax. The present, he thought, was by no means a proper time to try new experiments in taxation: loan appeared to him to be by much the more eligible mode, as in more prosperous days, which he hoped would quickly return, it might be discharged.

Mr. GRATTAN observed, that from what the right honourable baronet had said, it appeared the expences of Government were still greater than even his statement. In the beginning of February last, he believed, the right honourable baronet made a candid statement of the public wants; within four months they had increased very largely. So, he said, they would continue to do. But this increase of expence was unwarranted by the state of the country considered in any point of view; and if ministers were profligate enough to wish to continue it, they would find the country unable to support it. No way remained to provide for its wants, but to cut down considerably its civil peace establishment. He was not against an increase of the army; on the contrary, he voted for it as a necessary measure; but when he did so, he endeavoured at the same time to stipulate for this retrenchment.

What then were the measures of the minister? What was his commercial arrangement? What were the constitutional arrangements he intended to propose? Would gentlemen vote away 450,000*l.* without knowing whether any beneficial measures were to be proposed in compensation? Was it the intention of the ministers to accede to the bills of his honourable friend [Mr. Forbes]? Would they evade his object by granting them only in form, or did they mean to give in substance something analogous to the constitution of Great Britain?

He called on the minister to declare, what his measures were: if they were good measures, he would meet from that side of the House as ready a co-operation in promoting them as from his own. If they were bad, gentlemen would know how to act on the present question. He implored them to give gentlemen some apology, some justification to the national part of the community, for having voted away such enormous sums.

Mr. HOBART said, that if any of the measures the right honourable gentleman alluded to, were connected in any manner with the question now before the House, he would be very willing to say how far he acceded to them. But he did not think they were. The House was now called upon to provide for its own measures. He never knew that the augmentation of the army was conditional, as seemed to be insinuated. What the measures were which he intended to bring forward must necessarily be known in a few days; all he would say now of them was, that they required to be well and maturely weighed. Something would certainly be proposed as to commerce, and particularly the East India trade; a measure had already been proposed and was nearly completed, which depended not at all on that House; and if it should turn out as much for the benefit of this country, as he believed it would, it would be the honour and pride of his life to have been the first to introduce it into the British House,

of Commons; he meant the more equal construction of the navigation law, by which this country would be enabled to export to English ports the produce of Asia and America.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY observed, that every man must admit the state of this country to be neither safe nor pleasant, and that if the confidence of the constituent body in the representative was ever peculiarly necessary, it was at present. Whether the present representative body possessed that confidence he would not determine. He observed, they were now called on to add to the ordinary income of the country 750,000*l.* They were also to bind themselves for an issue of 200,000*l.* for the support of commercial credit; and they were told also that it would be necessary to bind themselves to the issue of 300,000*l.* more, if it should be thought necessary; these together made a sum of 1,250,000*l.* Add to this, the expence of the militia, which, the first year, could not cost less than 160,000*l.* and this country will stand burthened with one million and an half *extra*, within one year; this great and flourishing country, the revenue of the metropolis of which is not sufficient to pay its officers. To men who have any stake, any interest in the country, this, he thought, was one of the most serious affairs. He thought it would have been only candid in gentlemen on the other side, if they had given some intimation to those on his, of measures they meant to introduce for the public good, in reward for the most uniform support of them, in every measure necessary to strengthen the hands of Government; a support which extended to some of the strongest laws which were ever passed in a free country; witness the gunpowder act, which he hesitated not to pronounce a stronger law than had ever been passed in Great Britain or Ireland.

He then considered the assertion of Mr. Hobart, that in agreeing to the resolution proposed, the House was only providing for its own measures. He denied that the House was bound to provide for the encampment, which had been mentioned in the first statement as only contingent; or for the defalcation of 100,000*l.* in revenue, as it might not be permanent, or might be occasioned by improper measures of ministers, &c. As to the militia business, he was unwilling to speak of that; yet even with respect to that, he did not think the House irrevocably bound. In his mind, before they should bind themselves to any of these, they ought to know what measures beneficial to the country were intended. It had never been the practice to put the minister completely out of the power of the House, by voting what he calls for, and then looking for benefits for the public. It was unwise and impolitic to do so, and was unbecoming a representative body. To him it appeared that both the concession of good measures on one side, and the grant of public money on the other side, should go together.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER explained why the encampment, though first stated as a contingent expence, was now stated as certain; it was because the greater part of the expence of encampment, providing the troops with arms, &c. was inevitable, though the event itself was contingent. As to what gentlemen had said of the necessity of his right honourable friend [the Secretary] declaring what measures he intended to bring forward, in order to entitle him to confidence, he thought that after having just originated and carried through such a measure, as procuring an equitable explanation of the navigation act, he was already fully entitled to confidence. By that measure Great Britain has opened her ports to the export of Asiatic and American goods from this country—an advantage which must contribute in the highest degree to the prosperity of the kingdom. It was only just to hope that the other measures of his right honourable friend would be equally beneficial. The resolution now before the House he did not intend to hurry in its progress; it was only preparatory, as the subject must be again discussed in the committee of supply. He hoped that a measure for the necessary support of Government would not be opposed in its first stage.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY said, he had no objection to agree to a preliminary resolution, as the right honourable baronet promised not to hurry the business; and professed himself glad to hear that his promised motion on the East India business had induced ministers to anticipate him.

Mr. HOBART said, with some warmth, that the question had been agitated between the two countries, previous to any thing the honourable gentleman had said on the subject; and could not help declaring, that whatever benefit might result to the country from the negotiation, would not be at all due to the honourable gentleman's notice.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY said, he hoped to hear in a short time that the minister had anticipated him also, in his measure of parliamentary reform, and that a "communication between the two countries had taken place on that subject, previous to any thing he had said of it."

The resolution was then agreed to.

Mr. GRATTAN gave notice that he would, at a near day, submit to the committee of supply, a motion relative to the expences of Government. This he was induced to in consequence of the unsatisfactory manner in which his question to the minister had been answered.

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1793.

Mr. JOHN WOLFE, with leave of the House, withdrew the bill for the improvement of the navigation of the river Shannon.

He then moved, that the petition of Richard Griffith and others, which had been presented at an early period of this session, relative to the navigation of the Shannon, be referred to a committee.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE opposed the motion, on the ground that the standing rules and orders of the House of the year 1788, respecting petitions for inland navigations, had not been complied with.

A conversation of some length took place between the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. JOHN WOLFE, Mr. HOLMES, the Hon. Mr. PERY, Mr. MARCUS BEKESFORD, the SECRETARY OF STATE, and Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE.

And on the question being put, that the petition be referred to a committee, it was negatived without a division.

Ordered, that it be an instruction to the committee of the whole House, to take into further consideration the supply granted to his Majesty, which is to sit on Monday next, to take the following motion into consideration: "That whatever sum, or sums of money shall be advanced and paid into his Majesty's treasury, by any person or persons, not exceeding in the whole the sum of 250,000*l.* to be applied by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, or other chief governor or governors for the time being, towards the defence of this kingdom, and the necessary expences of Government, this House will make good the same, together with an interest, if raised by debentures of per cent. per annum; or if raised by treasury bills, at the rate of by the day for every 100*l.* so advanced and paid."

Went into committee to take into further consideration the bill to provide for the families of persons, chosen by ballot, to serve in the militia of the kingdom; Mr. BURGH in the chair.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE objected to the words "actual service," as being likely to mislead the common people, and induce them to believe that the militia were to serve out of the kingdom, which was contrary to the express provision of the act.

He proposed, that after the words "actual service," whenever they occurred throughout the bill, the words "in this kingdom," should be inserted.

Sir LUCIUS O'BRIEN was of opinion, that the words "actual service," would tend to mislead the uninformed; but he thought the amendment proposed was as likely to do so, as it would by implication declare that there was another kind of actual service, distinct from that "in this kingdom." He thought the object of the honourable gentlemen would be better attained, by inserting after the words "actual service," the words "out of their own county."

The SPEAKER objected to any deviation being made in this bill, from the diction of that to which it referred, the militia bill, as likely to create great confusion; and he particularly objected to the amendment last suggested, as it would in many instances deprive the families of the men described in it of the provision designed for them, since it was possible they might be on "actual service" within their own counties; and if the amendment were adopted, the provision made by the bill would be lost to their families during that period. He observed, that the object of gentlemen in proposing the amendment, was to prevent a misconception in the minds of people, who, it was said, believed that the militia were liable to serve out of the kingdom. This misconception, he said, could never have existed if pains had not been taken by seditious spirits to propagate it; and if the House should think it necessary, continually, to remove the doubts and errors, which designing and seditious men might wish to cause, they would never find an end of their labours.

After some further conversation, Mr. HOBART suggested that the very discussion which had now taken place, would tend to set the minds of the lower orders of people right in this matter; and that, therefore, the amendments were superfluous. The amendment was not passed.

The committee went through the bill.—Report ordered for to-morrow.

FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1793.

Mr. EGAN moved, that the second reading of the election bill [introduced by Mr. Francis Hutchinson] be postponed to the first of September next.

Mr. WESLEY observed, that as the honourable gentleman who introduced the bill was not present, it would be better to postpone this motion till his arrival.

Mr. EGAN would not have made the motion, if the bill, professing only to collect and amend the existing laws for regulating elections, did not at one blow disfranchise eleven boroughs of this kingdom, and that too at a time when a bill for effecting a reform of the representation was about to be introduced, and which, if it did any thing, must enlarge instead of diminishing the representation. He thought in introducing such a clause in such a bill, the honourable gentleman had not observed candour with regard to the House, and therefore no great candour should be observed with respect to him. However, if gentlemen thought the first of September too remote a day, he would agree that the second reading should be postponed only a week, in order that gentlemen might have an opportunity of considering attentively, a bill which materially affected the representation.

The second reading was ordered for Friday se'nnight.

Mr. GRATTAN having moved that the committal of the revenue officers bill be postponed to next week,

Mr. MASON observed, that the principle of this bill had once been fully debated, and that since that time to the present, the annual introduction and rejection of the bill were considered as things of course. For several years the House had uniformly decided, that the first of August was the proper time for the committal of this bill. He saw now no reason for deviation from established practices; nay, indeed, the reasons for persisting in it were now stronger than ever, as it would be highly absurd, after having let into the constitution so great a number of Catholics, to diminish that of the Protestant electors. He therefore moved, "That the House should resolve into a committee to take the bill into consideration on the first day of August next."

Mr. GRATTAN in reply said, he knew very well that this bill had been repeatedly introduced and rejected; but he knew also, that a place bill, a pension bill, and responsibility bill, had also been frequently rejected; and yet gentlemen now thought proper to let them go into a committee. He hoped they would have done so with this also; and he recommended it to them again to consider, whether it would not be right to do so? If the arguments the right honourable gentleman had used, had any weight, they would have borne against those bills as well as against this. But the frequent rejection of a measure in that House was no good argument against it; the House were beginning to see things in a new light, and in this session, above any former one, they had seen the necessity of admitting some measures for the improvement and security of the constitution.

As to the principle of the bill, it was already the law of England; the analogy of the constitution directs that it should be

the law here also. The right honourable gentleman himself, he believed, would think, on reflection, that revenue officers would be more sedulous in their duty, if they had not the double occupation of suffrage. He called it an occupation, and he knew it to be so, and a very anxious one too. If the bill were suffered to pass, the officer would not only be likely to act better, but if he acted amiss, his fault would be more scrupulously and impartially enquired into and corrected, if he had not the set-off of a vote. Another advantage flowing from it would be, the number of those officers would be less.

With respect to the argument the right honourable gentleman drew from the recent enfranchisement, of the Catholics against the bill, he thought it invalid; for the Catholics were qualified to hold places in the revenue, by the very bill which qualified them to vote for members of Parliament. This bill then went not to lessen the number of Protestant electors exclusively, since it equally affected the Catholics; unless it was the idea of the right honourable gentleman, which, he hoped and believed, was not the case, that while the law admitted Catholics to hold places in the revenue, it was the determination of those who presided over the revenue, that none of that description should be appointed.

He did not expect that any thing would have been said on this subject to-day: the House was not aware of any debate on it; he therefore thought it would be better to defer the motion which the right honourable gentleman had now made to some day next week, when gentlemen might come prepared to go into the question at large.

Mr. MASON said a few words in explanation, and agreed to the postponement.

Mr. CONOLLY was sorry to see a disposition prevail on the other side of the House, to treat in a very cavalier manner every bill tending to amend the constitution. It would be much better, he thought, if such were their determination, to let the question come on, and kick the bill out, as the phrase was, by way of preface to a kicking out of all the other constitutional measures.

Mr. HOBART said, whatever might be the opinion of gentlemen on his side of the House with respect to the bill itself, it certainly was not the intention of any one of them to throw it out by surprise; on the contrary, they meant to meet it fairly, and give it a full and fair discussion. It was not to be wondered at, however, that his right honourable friend, connected as he was, should feel himself much more warmly interested on this subject than other gentlemen.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, the gentlemen on the other side seemed to labour under two mistakes; the one was, that there was a disposition in those with whom he acted to kick out constitutional measures: the other was, that every bill introduced by gentlemen on the other side, really tended to amend the constitution. For his part, if he erred in opposing this bill on constitutional grounds, he did so in consequence of errors imbibed from the doctrines of the gentlemen on the other side, from whom he had been learning the constitution since the commencement of the session. For a long time those gentlemen had strenuously inculcated that the privilege of voting for members of Parliament was by the constitution, the birthright of a freeman, and that the man who has a property in the soil has an unalienable right to have a representative. Now they propose a bill for depriving a great number of men, thus interested in the soil, of this unalienable right, and tell the House that this is a bill to amend the constitution. The bill might possibly be defended as a remedy for a particular evil, but on general constitutional ground, it stood in rather an awkward predicament.

MR. GRATTAN replied, that there was a distinction between men who are entitled to vote from their interest in the soil, and those who hold an office, which induces them, by every motive that generally weighs with men of the world, to abuse that right.

Friday was then agreed on as the day when the question for the committal is to be debated.

The House adjourned to Monday next.

MONDAY, JUNE 10, 1793.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL presented to the House, according to order, a bill to repeal so much of an act passed in the thirty second year of his present Majesty, entitled, an act for confirming the powers of the Society of King's Inns, Dublin; and to repeal an act, entitled, an act to regulate the admission of barristers at law, as confirms the charter of the said society; which was received and read the first time.

On the motion of Mr. GRATTAN, leave was given to bring in a bill for preventing the excessive high price of coals in the city of Dublin, and to encourage the storage of coals therein; and that Mr. Grattan, Mr. Graydon, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Barrington and Mr. Vandeleur, of Kilrush, do prepare and bring in the same.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER stated, that he would now put the House into possession of the intentions of Government for the public service; a measure that would go to the intentions and answer all the purposes of a place bill, a pension bill, a responsibility bill, and a qualification bill, so as to render separate bills for these purposes absolutely unnecessary. That if the idea of what he would propose met with the approbation of the House, he would bring in a bill that would regulate the issue from the treasury of all public money—would add to and confirm the authority of Parliament over their grants—would lessen the expenditure of the nation, and the influence of the crown, and remove all cause of jealousies. He observed, that the treasury of Ireland was and is under the controul of the treasury of Great Britain; this he would remove, and place it under that of the Irish House of Commons. He then read several extracts from old acts, which proved that for many years previous to the commencement of the sixteenth century, there had been no subsidy granted to the crown; but that all the expences of Government were paid from the King's own revenue. In this bill, which would establish an Irish board of treasury, the officers would be entirely responsible to that House; so it would preclude the necessity of a responsibility bill. It would render the whole of the hereditary revenue the money of the public, and at the disposal of Parliament. It would give the crown, in lieu of that revenue, a certain specific civil list; and all pensions whatever were to be paid out of that list; so that would go to the intent of the pension bill. That all supplies and grants should be appropriated solely to the specific purposes for which they should be voted, and not to be diverted to any other purposes. That it would exclude from seats in the House, a number of placemen; would render the acceptance of any place whatever under the crown, by a member of the House of Commons a vacating of his seat, unless re-elected; and would ascertain the quantum of estate, or property necessary to be possessed by every person to be elected; and this surely would answer the purposes of a place bill, and a qualification bill. Respecting our commerce, that it would be extended beyond all present conceptions, by explaining the navigation act so as to render Ireland equal in that point with Great Britain, and extend our trade freely to the three other quarters of the globe as well as Europe; and the privilege of exporting all the produce of Asia, Africa and America to England.

Mr. FORBES expressed his satisfaction at what was offered, but contended that these concessions did not go so far as he wished; nor far enough to preclude the necessity of the place, pension, responsibility and qualification bills.

Although there was no question before the House, yet the conversation (for it could not be called a debate) was continued till near nine o'clock, by Mr. FORBES, Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY, the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. Secretary HOBART, Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD and Doctor DUIGENAN. It chiefly consisted of explanations, questions, and points of law, concerning the exposition of the navigation act; and whether the hereditary revenue was given to the crown only in trust, or was the absolute right of the crown given in lieu of the feudal rights.

When this conversation ended, Mr. FORBES moved to go into the committee on the place bill, (which was one of the orders of the day). This was opposed as unnecessary, till the bills of the Chancellor of the Exchequer should appear. But Mr. FORBES persisting, Mr. SPEAKER put the question on his leaving the chair; against which Mr. MASON and Sir BOYLE ROCHE spoke.

The House divided.

Ayes for going into the committee	41
Noes	110

TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 1793.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY presented to the House, according to order, a bill to ascertain the law relating to libels; which was received, and read the first time.

Ordered, that the said bill be printed.

Mr. MASON, according to order, reported from the committee of the whole House to whom it was referred to take into further consideration the supply granted to his Majesty, as also his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's speech, the resolution which the committee had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the table; where the same was read, and is as follows:

- Resolved, that it is the opinion of this committee, that whatever sum or sums of money shall be advanced and paid into his Majesty's treasury by any person or persons, not exceeding in the whole the sum of 250,000*l.* to be applied by his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, or other chief governor or governors of this kingdom for the time being, towards the defence of this kingdom and the necessary expences of government, this House will make good the same, together with an interest if raised by debentures

of 5*l.* per centum per annum, or if raised by treasury bills at the rate of 3*d.* by the day for every 100*l.* so advanced and paid.

The resolutions being read, Mr. VANDELEUR said, that before the recess he had presaged that from the state of the country very considerable sums would be called for;—but the right honourable baronet at the head of the finance of this country had said with an air of triumph that 200,000*l.* was all he should ask for; he had then answered, by assertion, the statement founded on calculation, but he now found we were to be led step by step to an accumulation of debt which this country, from the depressed and ruined state of both public and private credit, was unable to bear;—this country, he said, was embarrassed at present equal to the depression of 1779.—The right honourable baronet unable to fill in this country a loan of only 200,000*l.* had been obliged to go to England to procure money and secure the interest payable on the Exchange of London;—a sum of 950,000*l.* has been already called for, and a further sum will be wanting, amounting in the whole to 1,400,000*l.*—a system of finance has been adopted more ruinous and more pernicious than ever practised, a system which the right honourable baronet must have borrowed from the French financier Monsieur Cambon;—the arrears on the establishments were paid in the loan debentures; this paper was brought into the market and operated as a necessary consequence to the depression of the whole stock.—The debentures which had been issued at 5 per cent. fell to 90. He asked how were we to answer to the public and our constituents for the accumulation of debt? He stated the gross revenue of the last half year compared with that of the preceding year had fallen short 87,000*l.*—this made a defalcation on the whole year of 147,000*l.*—This was the reason which induced him to disapprove the embodying the militia, for although he admitted it was the most constitutional defence the country could have, it was attended with such a monstrous expence as the present distressed state of the country could not permit.—When the revenues and finances of the kingdom were in this very embarrassed situation he expected that a reduction of expence would have been proposed and a system of œconomy adopted—that useless and unnecessary offices would have been abolished—that some alleviation from their present burdens would have been held out to the people.—In every department of our Government effectual arrangements might be made.—Our revenues are collected at an expence unparalleled in any other nation, and contrary to what happens in every other country;—the proportion of expence of collecting the revenue has been augmented.—In 1750, the revenues were collected at an expence of 9 per cent.—in 1774 they were collected at 13 per cent.—and now they are collected at upwards of 17 per cent. and the customs

and excise at upwards of 16 per cent.—the incidents of the revenue alone since 1785 have grown from 67,000*l.* to 120,000*l.*

He was much disappointed to hear the statement made the last night, that the most salutary regulations of the responsibility bill were not to be adopted, those which went to give a superintending power to the commissioners over the several boards of revenue, because it was absurd that the same board should have an unlimited power of incurring expence, and have likewise the power of controlling that expence. There was another provision; the necessity for which was observed by one of the ablest men who ever directed the affairs of this kingdom—he formed a resolution on it—the bill only went to enforce this resolution, which was scandalously evaded by making it law. He hoped never hereafter to see that public scandal, the King's Exchequer converted into an open discounting office.

He concluded his observations by saying, that though he knew the surplus of the loan which was granted last year to constitute a sinking fund, was to be appropriated to form a security for the new loan. In case that revenue be deficient how are the public creditors to be secured unless you have recourse to new taxes, which this exhausted country is unable to bear.

The CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER answered Mr. Vandeleur in a speech of some length, in which he denied that he knew nothing of loan for one million; he called only for 250,000*l.* in addition to the 200,000*l.* voted before.—The present he thought an improper time for discussing the measure of the militia as the honourable gentleman had done; and as to the loan fund, he informed him that 100,000*l.* is about to be paid off by that fund agreeable to the purposes of its institution.

SIR HERCULES LANGRISHE said, that though it was true, that no money from the custom-house had reached the treasury for some time, yet it was not true that the revenue had been so unproductive as merely to pay the clerks, &c. The fact was, that the revenue of the port of Dublin had paid large sums to different branches of the public service, though nothing had been remitted to the treasury.—Besides, there were much goods in the stores, on which the duties were not yet paid, from the difficulty which merchants found in getting cash.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM observed that the public credit of this country having less stability than that of England was more easily hurt by misrepresentation, and it was to misrepresentation of the true state of things in Ireland that the public distress was owing. He thought gentlemen should always view things in the best point of view, not the worst, and that where they could give support to Government they should do it with alacrity. He

denied that any thing like traffic on the public money existed in the officers.

Mr. VANDELEUR vindicated himself from the charge of misrepresentation, but confessed he did not think the true way to serve the country was to over-rate its abilities.

Mr. FORBES said, that certainly no person acquainted with the character and principles of the right honourable gentleman who spoke last but one, could suspect him of trafficking on the public money; but when a treasury clerk, whose salary did not amount to more than 50*l.* or 60*l.* per annum, became bankrupt for 250,000*l.* the public would be led to suspect some unfair dealing with the public money, even if a gentleman possessed of ten times the purity of the right honourable member, denied it.

The report of the committee was agreed to *nem. con.*

Doctor BROWNE presented a petition of the provost, fellows and scholars of Trinity College, Dublin, under their common seal; setting forth, that the petitioners and their predecessors have for a long series of years used their best endeavour to promote the study and improvement of the faculty of physic in the said college, and considerable sums of money have been, and are annually and otherwise applied by them for that purpose; that an act having passed in this kingdom for the establishment of a complete school of physic, of which three university professors make a part, namely, the professors of botany, chemistry and anatomy, the petitioners for the encouragement of science, and without any obligation from their charter or statutes so to do, have continued to make a liberal provision for the support of those professorships; that a botany garden is indispensably necessary for the success of that science, but the funds of the said college are totally inadequate to the establishment or support of such an institution, they have exerted their utmost efforts to promote it by allocating for that purpose a fund which in the last year amounted to the sum of 112*l.* but which will be insufficient for the establishment or maintenance of such an institution; that the legislature having been pleased to grant several sums of money to the Dublin Society towards providing and maintaining a botany garden, that society caused application to be made to the petitioners for their advice, assistance and contribution, and as the petitioners are informed, applied to the College of Physicians for the like purposes, and the members of the said college have, as far as in them lay, granted the annual sum of 100*l.* for that purpose out of funds vested in them for medical purposes; the petitioners apprehend that by the application of the said several funds, and by the co-operation of a certain number of persons out of the said

three bodies, the success of the said scheme will be most effectually promoted; that the copy of a bill for those purposes having been laid before the petitioners, they are humbly of opinion, that the said bill if passed into a law would tend to promote the success of the said institution, which they consider as necessary to a complete school of physic and useful to the University, and whatever regulations may be made in respect to the said establishment, they humbly hope that the wisdom of the legislature will provide that the medical and other students shall have the full benefit of it, the petitioners having nothing in view but their advantage, the success of the said school of physic, and the advancement of science.

Ordered, that the said petition be referred to the committee of the whole House to whom it was referred to take into consideration a bill for directing the application of certain sums of money heretofore granted towards providing and maintaining a botany garden, and for the appointment of trustees for that purpose.

The Provost then presented a petition of the president and fellows of the King and Queen's College of Physicians in Dublin, under their common seal; setting forth, that in the year 1785 the House was pleased to appoint a committee to enquire into the best means for the establishment of a complete school of physic in this kingdom, and to refer a petition from the petitioners for that purpose to the said committee, before which several of the principal members of the said college were examined, who on such examination declared their opinions, that a botany garden was necessary to such an institution, and the said committee was pleased to enter into a resolution to that effect; that in the year 1790 the legislature was pleased to grant to the Dublin Society a sum of 300*l.* towards providing and maintaining a botany garden, and the said society in the month of July in that year resolved to consider in the month of November then next, such plans for the application of the said sum as should be submitted to them by gentlemen of the medical faculty; that in the following session of 1791 a further sum of 300*l.* was granted for the same purpose, and similar grants were made in the sessions of 1792 and 1793; that on the 2d of June 1791 the said Dublin Society entered into the following resolution: "Resolved, that the assistant secretary do write letters to the registers of the University and College of Physicians, to be by them laid before their respective boards, acquainting them that it is the wish of the Dublin Society that the several sums granted should be forthwith applied to that purpose, requesting their advice and assistance, if they should approve of the measure, and be informed what sums they may think proper to grant towards the same; and that it is the opinion of this society, that deputations from their respective bodies should be appointed to carry into effect their said design;" that in conse-

quence of the said resolution of the 2d of June, 1791, the assistant secretary of the said society wrote letters to the registers of the University and the said College of Physicians, requesting their advice and assistance relative to the establishing a botany garden in or near Dublin, and received for answer from the register of the university, that it had been for a long time the wish of that board to co-operate in any scheme by which a botany garden may be established on the most useful principles; that for this purpose they had allocated an annual sum, at present exceeding 100*l.* and in order to expedite the plan, that they had appointed a select committee of the senior fellows, who were ready to meet any deputation from the Dublin Society and the College of Physicians; which answer was communicated to the Dublin Society on the 24th of November, 1791; that in consequence of an application made to the register of the petitioners by the assistant secretary of the Dublin Society, pursuant to their said resolution of the 2d of June, 1791, the petitioners appointed a select committee of their body to co-operate with the Dublin Society and the University in carrying into effect the establishment of a botanic garden, which said appointment was communicated to the said Dublin Society on the 8th of December, 1791, who on that day appointed a select committee to confer and to co-operate with the committees which had been appointed by the University, and the petitioners in consequence of the said resolution of the Dublin Society, and of applications made to the said University and the said College of Physicians, pursuant to that resolution; that out of a fund, of which the petitioners are trustees, for medical purposes, they have granted as far as in them lay 100*l.* yearly towards the establishment and support of the said garden, and are ready to give their best assistance in forwarding a scheme so highly useful and so necessary to the success of a school of physic; the petitioners conceive that by the application of the said united funds and co-operation of a certain number of persons to be appointed for that purpose, by the petitioners, a botanic garden may be established on the most useful principles; that such an establishment would be beneficial to the said University, the School of Physic and the public, and that the bill now depending on that subject, if passed into a law would answer those purposes; and therefore praying the House will take into consideration a subject so essential to the improvement of science.

Ordered, that the said petition be referred to the committee of the whole House to whom it was referred to take into consideration a bill for directing the application of certain sums of money heretofore granted towards providing and maintaining a botany garden, and for the appointment of trustees for that purpose.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY presented to the House, a bill to enable archbishops, bishops, deans, and deans and chapters, and other ecclesiastical persons, to grant leases for a further term of lives or years; which was received and read the first time.

The order of the day for the committal of the pension bill being read,

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER opposed the committal, on the ground of a similar measure being intended to be brought in as part of the ministerial arrangement.

Mr. W. B. PONSONBY wished that the bill might go into committee, in order to ascertain what parts of the bill Administration would adopt, and what reject.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he would adopt the principle of the bill, that of limiting the pension list; he would also adopt the principle of the reduction, and would propose a reduction of the present pension list, by a very considerable sum. He wanted not to evade the measure, he wished to answer expressly as to the precise sum at which he would limit the list; he was not, however, at that moment prepared to do so, but if the hon. gent. would, at least, postpone his measure, he would come down in a few days fully prepared to answer explicitly on this subject.

Mr. FORBES said, he had no objection to postpone the measure for a few days, but would, for the right honourable baronet's information, again state the objects of the bill.—They were two: *œconomy* and constitution; *œconomy*, by reducing the list 35,000*l.* and providing that this saving shall not be made an addition to the credit list, but be *bona fide* a saving to the country. If the right honourable baronet would not adopt this principle, he would oppose the bill as a measure of *œconomy*.

His next object was constitution, by securing the independence of Parliament. And this he proposed to effect by excluding from the House all pensioners for a term of years, as in England, where men of this description were found as dependent on Government as pensioners during pleasure. If the right honourable baronet opposed this principle, he would oppose the bill as a measure of constitution.

The committal of the bill was then postponed to Monday next.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 1793.

A petition of the mayor and sheriffs of the city of Cork, and of the gentlemen, merchants, manufacturers and traders of the city of Cork and county of Cork, convened at the Guild-hall of the city of Cork, pursuant to public notice, was presented by Mr. LONGFIELD to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners conceive it unnecessary to trouble the House with the distresses which have already arisen from the state of public credit, and of the necessity there is for the interference of the legislature in its support; but the petitioners humbly beg leave to represent the evil consequences which must arise if that support be not most speedily afforded: that some of the manufacturers have been already obliged to discharge their workmen, who now subsist upon charity; but if the great manufacturers of this part of the country should be driven to that necessity, what must follow is of too serious a nature to the peace and order of society to commit to public view; that the humanity of some of the great manufacturers has induced many of them, though at a very heavy loss, to continue their men in employment, but this they declare can hold for a very short time if Parliament shall not be pleased to give its aid, and how such a multitude could subsist out of employment they leave to the consideration of the House; that the petitioners having the firmest reliance on the attention of the House to the prosperity of the kingdom and the protection of its inhabitants, have no doubt but that the House will be pleased fully to inform themselves of the pecuniary aid that will be absolutely necessary to grant the petitioners, to enable the manufacturers to continue business, and to carry on trade in general, which is so very essential to the support of the government of the kingdom; and on this reliance the petitioners most humbly hope the House will be pleased to take their petition into immediate consideration, and grant to them such relief as to the House shall seem meet.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

The PROVOST supported the petition: he did not impeach the character of the gentlemen appointed to distribute this money, but three weeks had elapsed, he said, since 100,000*l.* had been issued by them to the manufacturers of Dublin, though for Cork nothing had yet been done. A delay of relief for three weeks might be fatal to a commercial city, and he hoped the gentlemen would attend to this circumstance.

The CHANCELLOR OF EXCHEQUER had no doubt of the merit of the people of Cork. The money had been granted for the purpose of giving general relief to the whole kingdom. The

people of Cork would share it in due time, but it was natural that Dublin should first have claimed. The distresses of Cork he did not doubt; the distress was general throughout the kingdom, and it was vain to hope that the grant, however disposed of, could completely remedy it. The whole revenue would be insufficient to do so. Commercial calamity, he said, was not confined to this country, it was universal throughout Europe, in which he believed there was not a market which was not overstocked in consequence of the spirit of adventure that the ideal wealth of paper-money had created. He thought the management of the money should be left entirely to the gentlemen who had undertaken that troublesome office without any reward but that arising from the consciousness of having discharged their duty.

Mr. HOBART was of the same opinion, and bore testimony to the excellent conduct of those gentlemen.

Mr. HOLMES moved for leave to bring in a bill to prevent vexatious arrests, and to regulate the taking of bail in certain cases; which was granted.

The House then sat in committee on the Musical Society loan bill.

Mr. MASON opposed that clause in the bill which goes to enable parish vestries to apportion sums on the inhabitants. It would make the bill a bill of taxation, and thus spoil its effect.

Mr. GRAYDON defended the clause, and asserted the bill would not impose an involuntary tax, because it gave the parishes an option, either to adopt or reject it. In England, he said, upwards of 1,700,000*l.* was levied annually to support the poor, and with very little good to the community. This bill proposed means of effecting a fund once for all, which should provide for the industrious poor, and thus prevent the introduction of poor rates.

Sir H. LANGRISHE said, the bill must operate as a bill of involuntary taxation, since Catholics were excluded from vestries.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER was of the same opinion. He praised the institution of private charitable clubs in which the contributions are voluntary, and the members share in sickness the funds to which they contribute in health. The situation of the poor in this country, he asserted, was improving rapidly, and would improve, and he did not think that this bill would contribute to that end, unless the contributions were purely voluntary.

Sir J. BLAQUIERE drew a striking picture of the situation of the poor in Ireland, and supported the bill in its present form, as the only bar that could possibly prevent the introduction of poor rates.

Lord HILLSBOROUGH and Mr. R. JOHNSON both spoke against the bill.

Mr. GRAYDON, after answering the various objections that had been made, finding an inclination in the House to adjourn the further consideration of the business till to-morrow, moved, that the chairmain should report progress, and ask leave to sit again, which was agreed to.

Read a third time, and passed, Cork coal bill.

On the third reading of the bill for repealing part of the King's Inns act,

Dr. BROWNE said, he had not been apprized of the passage of the bill through the house—if he had he would have offered something on the subject of the recent regulations relative to admission to the bar. It had been the general idea of the gentlemen of the profession that a repeal of these regulations would have taken place, and candidates put precisely in the same situation in which they had been under the Chief Baron's act. He was sorry to find this was not to be the case, for he considered the late regulations, by which gentlemen, who had taken degrees in the University, were deprived of that priority which they enjoyed under the Chief Baron's act, as a breach of public faith, since on the faith of that act many gentlemen had entered college and gone through a very tedious and expensive course, in order to obtain a degree, by which they were now not at all to be benefited. He gave notice, that by assenting to the bill now before the House, he should not consider himself as precluded from offering to the House something on this subject at a future day.

Hon. Mr. F. HUTCHINSON declared his assent to the sentiments of his hon. colleague.

The PROVOST spoke on the same side, and was answered in a short speech by

The ATTORNEY GENERAL, who hoped the honourable gentlemen would not bring forward any motion on this subject, as he thought it would be improper for either the University or that House to interfere in the government of the society.

The bill was read a third time and passed.

Committed, reported, read a third time, and passed, the Forfeiture bill.

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 1793.

On the third reading of the bill to provide for the families of men chosen by lot to serve in the militia,

The Hon. F. HUTCHINSON, after professing himself warmly attached to the principle of this bill, declared that he was decidedly adverse to its two enacting clauses, particularly to the latter, which vests in justices of the peace a power of fining in the sum of 10*l.* or committing to prison for a month. He warned gentlemen again and again to consider before they committed a summary jurisdiction so important into the hands of any individual however respectable. Had such a power been given to magistrates by the Militia act, the country, he believed, would not be so quiet even as it now is.

He was no less an enemy to the other enacting clause which empowered vestries to applot for the maintenance of the persons described in the act. It was always dangerous, he said, to meddle with parish rates, but extremely so, if the interference went to that degree to which the act carried it; for, after having taken a good deal of pains to inform himself on this subject, he could assure gentlemen that the cess, which would be applotted under the bill, would in many parishes be double of all the other parish cesses taken together, and in every parish would be equal to the sum of all.

He had hitherto been silent on this subject from unwillingness, being a very young and inexperienced member of Parliament, to interfere in a subject so very delicate, and protested to God, that he would not now have spoken on it, but that he felt it impossible for him to repose in quiet on his pillow, if he did not state the great danger which he conceived there would be in adopting this measure.

As to the measure of a militia itself, he thought every honest man must be a friend to it, as a militia certainly was the best and most constitutional force of the country; and he thought, that so far from any opposition being made to the measure, the militia would before now have been embodied in every county in Ireland, if the fine, instead of being laid so high as 10*l.* had been laid at that sum for which the colonels could easily find substitutes. At least he could say, that this would have been the case in that part of the country where he usually resides.

Mr. HOBART said, he had thought that after the very ample discussion which this business had received in every stage of its progress no more would have been said on it. He regretted exceedingly that the honourable gentleman had not made these observations before, when a right honourable gentleman was present, who had shewn himself so perfectly master of every part of the

business, and would no doubt have made satisfactory replies to what had been now said. For his part he should only say, that the bill was a copy of the English act, that the provision which the bill made for the families of militia-men was a necessary and a humane measure; and as to the parish applotments the bill was not imperative, but left the parishes at liberty to adopt them or not.

Mr. B. CONYNGHAM said, that whatever applotments might be made for the purposes of the bill would be paid with cheerfulness.

Colonel BLAQUIERE approved highly of the bill; it was founded on a charitable principle, and was sure it would perfectly satisfy their women. He insinuated that opposition arose to the militia from gentlemen who wished to be colonels in it: if the numbers of counties in the kingdom were equal to that of the members in that House, he had no doubt but they would all be satisfied; but, as that was not the case, gentlemen should not look for impossibilities.

After some further conversation, the bill was read a third time and passed

A petition of certain of the inhabitants of that part of the county of the city and county of Dublin, lying north-eastward of the Lying-in Hospital in said city, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House by the SOLICITOR GENERAL, and read; setting forth, that there is a considerable district lying north-eastward of the city of Dublin on which many buildings lately have been, and many more likely to be erected for inhabitants to dwell in, and that the petitioners being situate within the said district, whose inhabitants are becoming very numerous, are destitute of any ecclesiastical duties, or of any person to perform the same; the petitioners therefore pray that all that tract of ground from the fountain north-east of Sackville-street in the said city, and from thence to Ballybough-lane in the county of Dublin, may be brought within the operation of the several laws for forming and regulating parishes within the city of Dublin and suburbs thereof, according to such means and bounds as upon mature consideration may be judged necessary and expedient, in like manner as parishes under similar circumstances have been heretofore formed.

The petition was referred to the consideration of a committee.

A petition of the revenue officers, whose names are thereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves and the other officers of his Majesty's revenue of Ireland, was presented to the House by

Mr. MASON, and read; setting forth, that petitioners have seen, with infinite sorrow and alarm, a bill introduced into the House tending to deprive them of their franchise, and disgrace them in the eyes of their fellow citizens; that petitioners beg leave, with all humility, to represent to the House, that by the constitution of this realm no citizen can be deprived of his franchise, unless he forfeits the same by a crime against the law; that the House is in a peculiar degree the guardian of the liberties and franchises of the people; that petitioners are unconscious of having committed any crime against the law, by accepting his Majesty's commission to assist in the collection of the revenues granted to his Majesty by Parliament; that by marking with disgrace the character of a revenue officer, the House will take away the greatest incentive to the true discharge of his duty, and hereafter, should the bill pass, no man, who regards character, will accept of a revenue employment; petitioners therefore humbly pray that the House, which is the guardian of the rights and franchises of the people, will not (because with justice and a due regard to the constitution it cannot) deprive of their franchise, and disgrace in the eyes of their fellow citizens, a numerous class of loyal subjects, whose services are necessary to their country, who hold their reputation as dear as any other class of men, and who have not by any crime forfeited their rights as Irishmen.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

An engrossed bill for the further regulating the price at which coals shall be purchased for the supply of the public coal-yards in the city of Cork, and sold out of the same, was read the third time and passed.

After a short preface, the ATTORNEY GENERAL moved, that leave be given to bring in a bill more effectually to prevent, during the present war between Great Britain and France, all traitorous correspondence with, or aid or assistance being given to his Majesty's enemies.

Mr. GRATTAN rose to express his approbation of the principle of the bill. The act which had been passed in Great Britain, for the same purpose, certainly could not be efficacious, if not adopted in this country; and he thought it would be a very ungracious and unwise use, which we should make of our legislative independence, if we refused to give efficacy to a law which was judged necessary by the sister country for her safety. Of the bill itself, not having yet seen it, he could say nothing, but the principle of it, as stated by the Attorney General, had his hearty approbation.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then presented the bill; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next.

Read a third time, and passed, Mr. Tuthill's private bill.

On the order of the day for the House to resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration a bill for the better preservation of the peace, and establishing and regulating a nightly watch in the district of the metropolis, and for discontinuing from a certain time therein mentioned, the duties, power and salaries of the commissioners of police and divisional justices of the peace, being read,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL requested the right honourable gentleman would condescend to postpone the committal of this bill to Monday se'nnight, as the servants of the crown had been so occupied by business of a very important nature, that they had not had time to give this bill, as yet, due consideration.

Mr. GRATTAN replied, that certainly he should not oppose the postponement. Yet, he confessed he should agree to it with more chearfulness, if the right honourable gentleman would inform him and the public, what advantages they were to expect from their delay; if he would declare how far it was resolved by Administration to agree to the principle of the bill. That principle, he said, was simply this, to take the patronage of the institution out of the hands of Government, and vest it in the corporation of the city. If this principle was acceded to, there would be but little disagreement about the particular clauses. If Administration were determined to reject this principle, he saw no reason in postponing the committal; he thought they might decide the fate of the bill now as well as at any other time.

Mr. Secretary HOBART said, that the influence which Government derived from the present police institution was too trifling an object to engage their attention for a moment. Yet it undoubtedly would be a question for the consideration of the House, whether or not it would be wise to adopt the principle of the right honourable gentleman's bill, or continue the establishment on its present footing.

Mr. S. MOORE could not say how far it might be the intention of Administration, to agree to the bill of the right honourable gentlemen, but his own opinion he declared to be decidedly adverse to it. He argued against the bill for some time, on the ground of its not being consonant to the wishes of the rational and respectable part of the citizens, and of the danger of repealing established institutions, and freeing the minds of the multi-

tude from the restraint, which the existence of those institutions induce.

He thought of the police very differently from the right honourable gentleman. He was of opinion that it had fully answered the end of its institution, and he would remain of that opinion until convinced of his error, by other proofs than the clamours of a few, and the eloquence of the right honourable gentleman. If his Majesty's servants thought with him, they would profit by the suggestion that had been made, and would that moment decide the fate of the bill.

Mr. FORBES said, the reasoning of the honourable gentleman might have some weight, if the bill of his right honourable friend went to repeal the existing institution, without substituting any other in its place; but as the bill proposed a plan of more efficient and less objectionable guard, his arguments did not by any means apply.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY spoke in support of the bill; and Colonel BLAQUIERE against it.

The question for postponing the committal to Monday se'night was then put and carried.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL moved for leave to bring in a bill, for making and constituting a new parish, by the name of the Parish of Saint George, on the ground adjoining the city of Dublin, therein described, and for erecting and building a parish church therein.—Leave was given.

He then presented the bill; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time this day se'nnight.

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 1793.

As soon as the SPEAKER took the chair, and on counting, it appeared there were not forty members present; in consequence of which, the question of adjournment was put, agreeably to the notice which had been given on a former day.—It passed in the affirmative.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1793.

Several official papers were presented to the House, but there was no debate.

MONDAY, JUNE 17, 1793.

There not being forty members in the House at four o'clock, the SPEAKER adjourned to next day.

TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1793.

Mr. HOLMES presented a bill for the relief of insolvent debtors, with regard to the imprisonment of their persons; which was read a first time.

Mr. VANDELEUR moved for leave to bring in a bill, to regulate that part of the expenditure of the public money, respecting the erection of public buildings.—Leave was given.

He then presented the bill; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Friday next.

Mr. GRATTAN moved for leave to bring in a bill, to regulate the butter trade of the city and county of Dublin; which was granted.

Mr. FORBES said, that there were two orders lying on the table; one of which was for going into committee on the pension bill, and the other was for the second reading of the responsibility bill; and he moved for the first order being gone into.

This brought on a conversation of some length between the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. FORBES, Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY, and Mr. Secretary HOBART; in the course of which the principle of Mr. Forbes's pension bill was admitted by the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, who stated, that in the bill, which he meant to introduce, the pension list was to be limited in future to 80,000*l.* which would make a saving of 30,000*l.* annually, which was not to be applicable to any other purpose.

This measure, he said, would go to a diminution of the influence of the Crown, and a saving of the public money. At the same time that a retrenchment of the public expence was to be made, it would be necessary to provide a civil list for his Majesty, in lieu of his hereditary revenue; and no doubt the House would act in this business with justice and liberality, particularly at a period when monarchy is universally assailed.

It was intended that the quantum of the civil list should be specific, and be granted for life, which would prevent an augmentation of expence. Another object was, that a pension exceeding 12,000*l.* a year, was not to be granted to any person from a limited time, and that pensioners during pleasure, or for a term of years, were not to be eligible to serve in Parliament in future.

He then went into a detail of his intended arrangement, by which it appeared that the amount of the civil list to be granted, including the 80,000*l.* for pensions, would amount to 207,000*l.* annually.

Mr FORBES observed, that on a statement now made for the first time, it was impossible for gentlemen immediately to give any opinion. He confessed himself surprised, however, at hearing that of a system professing to be purely æconomical, a principal part was a grant of 7000*l.* per annum to two vice-treasurers resident in England, by way of compensation for the bringing home of those offices. This, added to 10,000*l.* which he heard was to be the annual stipend of the commissioners of the new treasury board, would make that institution cost the public 17,000*l.* per annum. Besides this, the places which had been created by the Marquis of Buckingham, in lieu of treasury offices, amounting to 3000*l.* a year, might fairly be added to the estimate, as he had not heard that any of them was to be extinguished. Thus the total cost of the new board would not be less than 20,000*l.* per annum.

He asked did ministers, at such time as this, think that they could reconcile the public to such an institution? An institution, the cost of which, if deducted from the boasted saving of 30,000*l.* per annum, would leave the public very little gainers, indeed, by the arrangement. If ever there was a time, he said, when reduction of expence, and a strong government were necessary, this was that time; but how could that strength in Government be obtained but by a strong treasury; and how could the treasury become strong by æconomy such as this? In his mind gentlemen should now, in order to prevent future misunderstanding, on this subject, come to some specific resolution, "that this board should be perfectly assimilated to that of Great Britain; that it should be an efficient board presiding not only over the issues of the public money from the treasury, but enabled also to enforce the payment of balances in the hands of collectors, &c."

Mr. HOBART professed himself much obliged to the honourable gentleman for thus arranging the new board for him, and ascertaining the salaries of its members; but for his part he was personally ignorant of any such idea being entertained by his Majesty's servants, as that of fixing those salaries so high as 10,000*l.*; something, to be sure must be given, but he thought 7000*l.* fully sufficient.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER also denied that the expence of the board would be as great as had been stated. He said, it was generous in the British minister to give up the patronage arising from his power, to nominate the two vice-treasurerships, even though compensation should be given; and asserted

that if the gentlemen on the other side were not pleased with the institution of the new board, they were to blame themselves, for they led to it.

Mr. FORBES observed, that the board proposed by his bill, differed essentially from that of the right honourable gentleman, for to his no salary whatsoever was annexed. The measures of responsibility, of a limited pension list, and a place bill, he was proud of, yet he did not wish by annexing his name to those measures, to deprive the right honourable gentleman of the honourable situation in which he stood, by now patronizing them; he was ready to give every support he was capable of giving in carrying those measures through; at the same time it could not be denied that they originated with him.

The conversation ended, by the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER declaring, that in his opinion, the most expensive business in the world was that which was professed to be done for nothing.

A petition of the working worsted weavers, the manufacturers of bay yarn, of the city and liberties of Dublin, whose names are thereunto subscribed; in behalf of themselves and the rest of their brethren throughout the kingdom, was presented to the House, by Mr. GRATTAN, and read; setting forth, that petitioners are in great distress, and reduced to the lowest ebb of penury and famine, owing to the general stagnation and almost total annihilation which have of late taken place in the various branches of manufacture; that petitioners beg leave to observe, that the fabrics from which they derive their support are camblets, broad and narrow stuffs, durants, ribdurines, broad and narrow callimancoes, everlastings, sattinets, florentines, worsted shags, plaid cloaks, beavers, cassimers, paragons, morinos, serges, mixed fabrics, composed in part of bay-yarn, are whole and half tabbinets, poplins, crapes, rigs and bombazines; that petitioners beg leave to observe, that in the year 1789 two thousand looms were employed in the vicinity of Dublin on the aforesaid fabrics, which gave employ to several thousands of both sexes, but from the above period the aforesaid number of looms have gradually diminished to less than one-fourth, and our brethren in the interior parts of the province of Leinster, and also the province of Munster, have felt the effects of the general stagnation, insomuch that in the course of the last two months the material, wool and bay yarn, has fallen in price twenty per cent. which must exceedingly injure the wool-grower and landed proprietor at the ensuing wool fairs, and also the wool-comber and manufacturers of bay-yarn, who have stock of manufactured goods on hands; that petitioners beg leave to observe, that in the year 1779 a similar stagnation prevailed in said branches, when by the humane interpo-

sition of the nobility and gentry in their behalf in the wear of manufactures composed of new drapery, petitioners got present relief, and felt the salutary effects for some years; that petitioners beg leave to remark, that the combing wool, from which bay-yarn is drawn, amounts at least to three-fourths of the fleece of Ireland, the other one-fourth being clothing-wool for the manufacture of broad and narrow cloths, consequently the working artificers employed in the manufacture of the combing wool amount to the second greatest body of artificers in this kingdom, and by the general stagnation which at present prevails in their different branches, the kingdom must feel a considerable loss; and therefore praying relief.

It was referred to a committee.

A petition of the president and assistants of the corporation instituted for the relief of the poor in the county of the city of Dublin, under their common seal, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the House did in the two last sessions of Parliament grant to petitioners 8000*l.* part of the sum prayed for by the petitioners for building a new House of Industry: that in consequence of the first grant, and at the request of petitioners, his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant had a plan made, and gave orders to the board of works for the execution thereof by contract; that his Excellency, knowing the ruinous state of the buildings occupied by the poor, caused dormitories capable of containing one thousand five hundred and twelve persons to be executed with extraordinary dispatch, and to the entire satisfaction of the petitioners; that a kitchen, dining hall, wash-house, porter's-lodge and surrounding wall have been since added, and that nothing is wanting to complete the plan but officers house and working sheds for the labouring poor; that some of the paupers have been already removed, and that were petitioners enabled entirely to vacate the old buildings before winter, a considerable saving would thereby accrue to the public, and the labour of the poor become more productive; and therefore praying the House to grant a sum for completing the said plan.

The petition was ordered to lie on the table.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 19, 1793.

There not being forty members, at four o'clock, the SPEAKER adjourned the House to next day.

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 1793.

A petition of the Dublin Society for promoting husbandry and other useful arts in Ireland, under their common seal, was presented to the House by Mr. HAYES and read; setting forth, that the petitioners have been entrusted from time to time with large and liberal grants from Parliament, in the application of which they trust they have acted to the best of their judgment for the advancement of the purposes for which they were intended; that out of the grants to this society for promoting husbandry and other useful arts the sum of 1200*l.* has been appropriated at the rate of 300*l.* a year for establishing a botanic garden; that the society propose to lay out the same for said purpose; that they have appointed a committee to take land for establishing it, and they do not think they can discharge the trust reposed in them with equal benefit to the objects of their institution, those of husbandry and useful arts, if they are to be joined with bodies whose objects are more connected with the professional knowledge of botany in all its extended branches, or whose peculiar object is the knowledge of plants, as to their medicinal qualities; that they apprehend that the establishment of a garden, confined to the peculiar objects, of this society will be effected with much less expense than for the objects of either of the other bodies who are comprehended in the bill now pending before the House; and they pray that the said grant of 1200*l.* may not be vested in trustees contrary to the grant already made of it, and that no other body may be joined with this society in the execution of the trust reposed in them; that the society did in the year 1791 wish to communicate with the two other bodies mentioned in the bill, but that the communication not tending to promote the object proposed, it ceased from that year, and the society proceeded to take measures for establishing a botanic garden; and therefore praying the said bill may not pass into a law, so far as respects this society.

It was ordered to lie on the table.

The PROVOST presented a bill to amend the laws in force for the encouragement of agriculture.

It was read a first time.

Mr. Secretary HOBART moved for leave to bring in a bill to regulate the trade of Ireland to and from China, and the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope; which was granted. This motion was prefaced by asserting and acknowledging the absolute right of Ireland to the East India trade. That the concession of a full West India trade to Ireland warranted the agreement of this House to the renewal of the East India charter.

He also observed, that all the trade of every part of Great Britain was through London, to which port every commodity must be sent for embarkation: whereas a ship of eight hundred tons would be sent annually to Cork, to be freighted by the merchants of this country, at 5*l*. per ton freight, and to bring directly back to Cork the returns from India.

Mr. MASON reported the resolutions which the committee of supply had directed him to report to the House; which he read in his place, and afterwards delivered in at the table, where the same were read, as follow:

1. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this committee, that the sum of 80,431*l*. 3*s*. 2*d*. be granted to his Majesty, for the first clothing and arming the militia of this kingdom.

2. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this committee, that the sum of 353,825*l*. 19*s*. 10*d*. be granted to his Majesty, for the pay and maintenance of the militia of this kingdom for one year.

The resolutions being read a second time, were agreed to by the House.

FRIDAY, JUNE 21, 1793.

The House, pursuant to order, resolved into a committee on the botanical garden bill.

This bill was strongly supported by the SECRETARY OF STATE, Mr. FRANCIS HUTCHINSON, and Mr. BROWNE, of the college; and as strenuously opposed by Mr. SPEAKER, Mr. HAYES, Mr. THOMAS BURGH, and Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL. The ground of the opposition was, that the Dublin Society should not be compelled thereby to give up 300*l*. to 112*l*. of the University, and 100*l*. of the College of Physicians, for a botanical garden for the more particular purpose of only medical and scientific knowledge, when agriculture and arts were the peculiar purposes of the grant of Parliament to the Dublin Society. As for the utility, and probable coincidence of both views, Doctor Hill was examined yesterday, and Doctor Percival to-day. And Mr. Solicitor General gave the amplest testimony of the great abilities and professional science in universal botany of Doctor Walter Wade, by whose aid a complete plan and arrangement of an universal botanic garden for every useful purpose of both art and science, had been made.

Great diversity of opinion also prevailed respecting the construction of the acts that granted money to the Dublin Society. At length the bill was lost by a majority of six, there being on the motion for the chairman's leaving the chair,

Ayes	—	—	—	24
Noes	—	—	—	18

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1793.

Mr. HOBART presented a bill for regulating the trade of Ireland to and from the East Indies, under certain conditions and provisions for a time therein mentioned; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read second time on Thursday next.

Read a third time and passed, the traitorous correspondence bill.

Mr. PERY presented a Limerick turnpike road bill; which was read a first time.

A petition of Turner Camack, Esq; was presented to the House, praying aid to enable him to carry on the manufacture of oil of vitriol, in establishing which he has expended the sum of 22,000*l*; which was referred to the consideration of a committee.

Alderman WARREN presented a bill for the more effectually collecting the public money to be raised by presentment within the county of the city of Dublin; and also for the more effectually repairing the roads within the county of the said city, and the liberties thereunto adjoining, and for other purposes therein specified; which was read a first time.

MONDAY, JUNE 24, 1793.

Sir EDWARD NEWENHAM presented a petition from certain persons against the bill now pending for erecting a district East of Rutland-square into a parish to be called St. George's.

Mr. GRATTAN also presented a petition from the corporation of the city of Dublin, against said bill, as encroaching on their rights.

A petition was also presented from the Reverend Mr. Barker, at present chaplain of St. George's chapel, against the bill, as tending to deprive him of certain dues which he now receives out of that district.

On the order of the day for reading this bill a second time being read,

Mr. VANDELEUR rose, and after speaking against the bill for some time on the ground of its being introduced without communication with the persons to be affected by its operation; on at of land having been purchased in that district under the idea

that no parish dues were to be paid, &c. he moved that the bill be read a second time on the 1st of November next.

This motion was opposed by the SOLICITOR GENERAL, who, with respect to the petition from the corporation of the city of Dublin, said he would, at the proper time, prove incontrovertibly that they have no just pretensions whatsoever to the rights they claim in that district.

On a division there were for reading a second time in November next,

Against it,	—	—	29
			65
Majority, against postponing	—		36

It was then, after some conversation, agreed that the bill should be read a second time on Wednesday; when the petitioners are to be heard by counsel against the bill.

Mr. HOLMES presented a bill for the relief of insolvents, in lieu of the former bill which he withdrew, which was read a first time.

On the order of the day for going into a committee on the police bill being read,

Doctor DUIGENAN rose, and in a very long speech stated his reasons for opposing the committal of the bill.—He hoped it would not only be rejected by the House, but scouted out of it with marked reprobation, as proposing an establishment in every respect less eligible than that at present in existence. He adverted to the preamble which states the reasons for enacting this bill to be, first the inefficacy of the present system; and secondly, the general complaints that have been made of it, and endeavoured to prove that both were false; that the bill proposed a police more expensive than the existing establishment, and in which a greater number of men are necessary for the preservation of the public peace, and that the complaints which have been raised against it originated nor with the public at large, but with petty factions in the different parishes, who by clandestine means procured petitions against it, of which the majority of the inhabitants were ignorant, or disapproved.

The object of the bill he stated to be, the establishment of a democracy in the city, by divesting the Crown of that wholesome controul which it at present possessed over the city.—He called to the recollection of the House what had happened at Paris in the reign of Henry the Fourth, in consequence of democratic faction prevailing;—he called their attention to the present state of Paris resulting from the same cause—to the events that took place in

England in the reign of Charles I. occasioned by the seditious spirit of the metropolis; and to the Scotch rebellion, which he attributed to the evil example that had been set by Edinburgh. From all these instances, he inferred, that it was highly dangerous, in a mixed monarchy, to suffer the democracy to acquire an excessive preponderance in a large city; it always led to what the factions of the present day aim at, republican government.

He then entered into a very minute and tedious detail of the bill, in order to shew that the system it proposed would be more expensive than the present one, and asserted, that a saving of one-sixth part of the present police tax was all the relief which the citizens of Dublin could hope from it. He was particularly severe on that part of the bill which enacts, that the election of the magistrates, in the proposed institution, should be in the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, with the approbation of the Common-council. He recited the former rejection of Alderman James by that body, as a striking instance of the evil that would result from this part of the bill, and declared, that the law which made the approbation of the commons necessary to the election of a chief magistrate, was a radical defect in the constitution of the city. According to the plan of expence which the bill proposed, it would cost the city, for the maintenance of 600 men, with the necessary officers, incidents, &c. above 3000*l.* *per annum* more than the present establishment.

Mr. GRATTAN declined entering into the minutiae of the bill at present—the proper time for that would be in the committee; till when he would wait to combat what the honourable gentleman had asserted, and he would pledge himself fully to refute him. The dominant idea in the honourable gentleman's calculations was, that the proposed plan would be more expensive than the existing establishment, and in order to give colour to the assertion, he had stated the annual expence of the police at 15,400*l.* and he had particularly said that this was the whole of the expence. Now in the latter part of the assertion, the honourable gentleman had fallen into a very considerable error—for would he pledge himself to shew from papers on the table that this was not the whole expence, and that 1,900*l.* *per annum* which is taken from the ordinary revenue for the purpose of paying the commissioners, was not included in this estimate. [Dr. Duigenan agreed that this was not included]—This sum, which went to support the useless part of the institution, which went to sow the seeds of ministerial influence, added to the other estimate, would make the annual expence be little less than 18,000*l.* even last year; in former years it bordered on 20,000*l.* If then the proposed plan were even as expensive as the honourable gentleman had stated it, which it was not, yet would it be cheaper than the present system

At any rate, the very material error the honourable gentleman had fallen into by the omission of so large a sum as 1,900*l.* should teach the House to be doubtful of the accuracy of his statement in other instances, and induce them rather to go into committee on the bill than suffer an erroneous estimate of expence to defeat the principle of the bill. Indeed he should be greatly surprized if, after what had been said on this subject, ministers could possibly oppose the committal: for his part, he had little doubt that by proper limitations and restrictions of salary, which might be proposed in the committee, the whole expence of 550 men on an average of the year round, might be confined to 11,000*l.* allowing 1*s.* per day for each private watchman—The other expences, including salaries to the superintending magistrates, divisional justices, &c. would not amount to 3000*l.* more; thus the whole would be but 14,000*l.* per ann. which is 4000*l.* cheaper than the present odious and insufficient establishment.

The honourable gentleman had stated that the saving of the proposed plan was in the pay of the watchmen; the contrary was the truth; the difference between the bill and the present police law was this, that by the bill the expence is for the watchmen, not for the patronage; by the law, the expence is incurred by the patronage, not by the watchmen. He would prove before the committee, if the bill were suffered to go before one, that the expence of the patronage equalled all the other expences of the institution put together.

As to the honourable gentlemen's assertion, that the bill went to establish a democracy in the city, he laughed at it. Did the honourable gentlemen remember that the superintending magistrates by this bill were chosen precisely in the same way in which the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of the city were chosen? Would the honourable gentleman say, that the law under which those magistrates were chosen, established a democracy in the metropolis?—Certainly he would not. Much as democracy was now reprobated, and much as it was now ridiculed as it existed in France, yet our respect for corporations and corporate rights should be preserved. Or, if the honourable gentleman disliked them, his dislike should rather induce him to propose a repeal of the existing laws for electing lord mayor and sheriffs, of the present constitution of the city, than to oppose the bill. In framing this bill he thought it better to take the constitution of the city, as he found it, than to resort to new ideas on that subject; nor did the constitution of the city appear to him so faulty in this instance, as it did to the honourable gentleman. What! should it be said that a city is governed by democracy, if the executive power have not the government of it? What was a corporation? What were corporate rights, but limitations against

the executive power! Whenever the crown interfered with a corporation, then a principle of the constitution was violated by the executive government. He would warn the honourable gentleman that democracy was more likely to be excited by the line of conduct he was pointing out, than by any other—namely, the interference of the Crown with the rights of corporations. It was that which would rise up party in opposition to the minister, and would throw the state into a kind of popular fever, which was equally dangerous to the liberty of the people, and the power of the Crown. But the conduct of his Majesty's ministers was the best refutation of the charge, for they were too sagacious and too vigilant to have admitted the bill, and suffered its progress hitherto, if there were any principle in it that favoured too strongly of democracy.

Dr. DUIGENAN spoke in reply to Mr. Grattan, and defended his omission of the 1,900*l.* as being money paid by the public, not by the citizens of Dublin only. He was going on in reply till stopped by the Speaker—as speaking out of order.

Mr. M. BERESFORD agreed with Mr. Grattan, that the committee would be the proper place for the detail of calculation. He said the minister had not bound himself by any thing he had said since the subject was proposed, which could be construed to bind him to the committal; he only declared that the patronage of the police was no object to Government, but that it would still be a question for the House, whether the appointment of the magistrates should rest with the Crown rather than the corporation.

He then proceeded to argue against the principle of the bill—namely, vesting the appointment of the superintending magistrates in the corporation. It was notorious, he said, that not long since that body had been completely under the direction of persons who were now outlaws, inasmuch that the *ipse dixit* of such a person could supersede the general good opinion of the city, as had been abundantly manifest in the rejection of Alderman James. Would the House commit to an assembly, liable to such influence, such power as that prescribed by the bill, a power which must necessarily render it still more obnoxious to that influence, and which must inevitably strengthen the faction? If the corporation were possessed of this power some months since, when ruffians, calling themselves National Guards, patrolled our streets, who would have had the courage to step forward and crush the growing sedition? Where would a magistrate have been found who would act with the same spirit as Alderman James did on that occasion?

With respect to the merits of the police establishment, he might call on some honourable friends in that House to bear witness to the vigilance of even its lowest officers, and to their perfect impartiality. His honourable friends had experienced the honest attention of the police to the reformation of their morals, and that those attentions were not carried farther than was necessary; he hoped then that his honourable friends would not go farther than was necessary in reforming the police.

Colonel BLAQUIERE spoke against the committal of the bill, and in favour of the present establishment, though he allowed, like all other human institutions, it was not perfect. He commended the vigilance of the police magistrates, from having seen them on some occasions heading the military, and declared, in praise of the institution, that "many lives had been saved, every outrage committed, and every redress given."

Mr. ORMSBY considered himself as not pledged to support the committal of the bill, because he had agreed to a first and second reading. He expected, indeed, that the bill would have been a very different one from what he now found it, and that, as expence had been complained of, the bill would have proposed a more economical system. Instead of this, he saw, that if the right honourable gentleman's plan were carried fully into execution, and the respective persons employed paid a due reward for their services (for the right honourable gentleman had mistaken the price of every man concerned in it from the alderman to the watchman) the proposed establishment would cost more than the existing one by four or five thousand pounds annually. As to the reasons for this bill, he thought them bad. The police institution he could not now consider as odious, for its magistrates were now the most popular men in the city. Unconstitutional he might have thought it, but whatever unconstitutional provisions there were in the present police law, those he saw cautiously preserved in the bill. For those reasons he would vote against the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Mr. HOBART did not think that he was in any manner bound to agree to the committal of this bill by any thing that he had said on a former occasion. He had not at all attended to the bill until the second reading; at that time he thought that gentlemen were not prepared for discussing the principle of the bill; he therefore had agreed to postpone that discussion till the present occasion, expressly declaring, however, that it would be a question for the House, whether they should agree to the principle of vesting the patronage in the corporation or not? He again declared, that the patronage of the police was no object to

government; on the contrary, they found much more difficulty in procuring persons to fill the respective offices, than was compensated by any advantage they might be supposed to derive from the disposal of those offices. He instanced the present Lord Mayor, who had resigned his office, as being too troublesome for a man who had other business to mind. He was of opinion, that the calculations of an honourable gentleman [Dr. Duigenan] were generally just, notwithstanding the omission of the 1,900*l.* paid towards the establishment by the revenue; and he could not help saying, that the bill was, in his mind, very objectionable in all its parts.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he did not wish to bind down any gentleman to support the committal of the bill, because he had agreed to it in its former stages through the House; yet he must say, the right honourable gentleman had taught him to believe, that he would not oppose the principle of the bill, as he had declared that he despised the patronage of the institution. He could not help lamenting that administration were still so ill advised as to defend the principle of the present system. It was impossible they could long do it; had they the authority of twenty Houses of Parliament at their back, they would find themselves unable to support the institution in its present state; they were wrong in principle and practice. The silly argument, that the bill created a democracy, would not avail them—it was a shallow artifice, suggested by the minister: it could not deceive the public—it could not deceive themselves. Though for the present a torpor had seized the minds of the citizens, and rendered them insensible of their injuries, yet they would speedily shake it off, they would again come forth, and shew ministers that the principle and the practice of the law was indefensible—they would tell them, what every gentleman knew to be the fact, that the police was originally but a job for the Crown, and now was maintained only because the city seemed to acquiesce with a torpid indifference.

Gentlemen had denied, that the institution was odious; but had those gentlemen examined the various reports which had been made on that subject by committees of that House, they would have known, that if ever a city entertained a deep rooted and cordial hatred of any measure—if ever a city entertained an odium capable of being ascertained by numerical calculation, the city of Dublin entertained such an hatred for this institution. No measure, no expence, no enormity of administration had ever excited discontent so strong or so general as this abominable establishment. But an honourable gentleman, [Colonel Blaquiere] had said as much in one word on the subject of police as he could say in twenty sentences—he had told the House

that "he had seen the police magistrate at the head of the military."

This single circumstance spoke the institution. To render recurrence to military aid unnecessary had been the professed object of the establishment of the police system. Yet was military aid resorted to on every occasion. Hence appeared the inefficacy of the establishment, and the falsehood of its pretext. Would any gentleman say, that it was fair or reasonable that the people of the city of Dublin should pay 18,000*l. per annum*, in order that the police magistrates may preserve the peace of the city by means of the King's army? No man would be so hardy. Yet it was inevitable he granted, that the police magistrate should resort to the military. The people so cordially, and *ex imo corde* abhorred the police, that it was impossible they could ever of themselves be efficacious; the fact was ascertained by the various reports before the House; but gentlemen had not read those reports; they were too voluminous to be read by men who knew how to vote without them.

As to the argument of an honourable gentleman [Mr. Ormsby] that the present bill retained all the unconstitutional parts of the police law, he would inform that gentlemen that, whatever strong parts of the police law were judged necessary for the preservation of the peace, those were copied, but with a difference which the honourable gentleman did not seem to attend to, namely, that in the police law those powers were vested in the Crown, and thence become unconstitutional, by the bill they were vested in the magistrates of the city. As to that other argument [of Mr. Beresford] against the bill drawn from the corporation being liable to factious influence, it went not merely against the bill, but against the Constitution of the city, and if it influenced the honourable gentleman at all, should induce him to move for a repeal of that constitution; else the honourable gentleman would be guilty of the absurdity of asserting, that the corporation might without danger be entrusted with the election of the superior officers, but to entrust them with the appointment of the subordinate ones would be fatal.

Dr. BROWN said, he should think himself highly criminal in sitting longer silent, seeing, in the light he did, the treachery and duplicity of gentlemen in administration. He was alarmed, in the beginning of the session, by the state of the country; he had yielded, in consequence of that alarm, to the government more than was right, perhaps; he did so, because he hoped the government would get a wholesome fright, and make great concessions to the country: they were frightened, and promised those concessions.—In consequence, great and enormous sums and charges upon the public were voted—they had now got the money; they had recovered from their alarm, and wanted to retract all their promises: this was a first, but an obvious symptom.

A repeal of the police act had been promised; its faults were admitted; amendment and correction was promised; the moment it comes to the point they retract: such, he now expected, would be their conduct in every instance; they had forgot all they said in the beginning of the session about reform; they would, if they could in the same manner bury it in silence, whistle away every other article of their implied faith, and express covenants. He spoke for himself; what he said was not in connection with opposition; he could not commend opposition for their silence of late, nor for their letting so much money be granted, before they had secured, actually secured to the people, the boons promised to the public by Government. He hoped no more money would be granted, or that the present grants would be stoppt in their progress, when in the shape of bills, until the administration were found more faithful to their engagements; or rather, until all they had promised, with respect to pensions, responsibility, India trade, &c. &c. &c. should have been actually done and executed. He said, he abhorred the police system from the beginning;—he had been an eye-witness of instances of cruelty, oppression, and negligences, in that body: he had walked the length of the town without meeting a single police-man. He said, it was easy to raise a cry, that the town was mighty well guarded; and fashion and folly, which never think at all, re-echo it in the mouths of a number of silly boys, the dupes or the instruments of cunning men. So the town was well lighted for two years; it had been infamously lighted ever since, yet fashion still cried, that the town was brilliantly illuminated: such was the cry in favour of the police. He bowed not to fashion; he denied that the town was better guarded than in the time of the old watch. Never were outrages and robberies more frequent than since the police establishment.—When was a gentleman known to be shot in the streets before they existed?

He said the right honourable gentleman [Mr. Hobart] declared the patronage was no object; why then did he oppose the present bill? He did not deny the police wanted amendment; why then not go into the committee? Let them defend their conduct on any footing of consistency or common sense.

He next reprobated the abominable and avowed idea, that corporations ought to be in the hands and under the controul of Government; it was the detested principles of the Stuarts, particularly Charles II. and James II. They endeavoured to get possession of every corporation, by destroying their charters—our present ministers by undermining them. Such were the notorious and avowed attacks on liberty in the present time, attacks which even the Stuarts endeavoured, in some degree, to cover. He loved the peace of the country, but if he saw the ministers abusing the powers of the country, to their own arbitrary pur-

poses, he would risk every thing rather than let them proceed in this course of duplicity.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER denied that any grants which had been made were on stipulation. He was against the committal.

DOCTOR BROWNE said, in explanation, he had been accused of inconsistency, in not opposing these grants of money before. He did not approve of them granted so unconditionally; but he did not think himself of consequence enough to speak against both sides of the House, till his indignation burst all bounds; and, in the next place, he had been weak enough to confide in the faith of ministers to the public, which he never would do again, though they employed all the party-coloured magpies they could get, in militia coats, to chatter for them.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE said, that an honourable and learned gentleman had taken a very unfortunate moment to arraign the pusillanimity and indignant conduct of the Administration, when the very contest in which they were engaged, was for the preservation of the just authority of the executive power, of which the learned gentleman and his friends were endeavouring to strip them—he had not meant to have spoke a word on the subject, if he had not been roused by the unnecessary warmth and unwarrantable expressions used by the learned gentlemen and his honourable friend [Mr. Grattan]; he had never taken any part in support of the present established system, because he thought it in many respects faulty and worthy of amendment, but not by such a bill as the present, than which, one more preposterously mischievous had never made its way into that House, and which, if adopted, he did in his conscience believe, would lead to the general overthrow of the establish government of the kingdom. He was not better informed, he said, than his neighbours, of the precise distinctions and constitutions of the different governments of the world; but every body knew, that the power of the sword put into the hands of the people, or of magistrates elected by the people, formed one of the constituent parts, and made one of the leading features of a democratic government: the very thing done, however well it might be intended, by this bill, which he conceived to be the most preposterous measure ever agitated in that assembly, and big with every danger to the state. He said, he was free to confess he did not approve of the mode in which the bill had been treated; the House ought to have rejected it at the second reading, and not to have suffered it to go to a committee, because throwing it out in the present stage, bore some appearance of a delusion, which he knew was never meant—abandon the patro-

nage was a general cry, and so my right honourable friend says he is ready to do ; but is there no difference between a surrender of the patronage, and the placing it in hands from whence the most serious mischiefs might arise ?

The present establishment was unpopular, hated, despised, says the honourable and learned gentleman—hated by whom?—By the turbulent and seditious whom it coerced, and by all that band of discontented and factious agitators, whom it has brought under the lash of the law. He ended, paying some handsome compliments to the worthy magistrate, who is at the head of the police, observing, that had the bill brought forward been less exceptionable than this, he should have thought it his duty, at a time like the present, to have opposed it, or the agitation of any measure which should tend to set afloat any of the tried and established securities for the peace of the kingdom. “ I will not (said he) open the barrel of gun-powder while squibs are flying in the streets.”

Mr. ARCHDALL said, he should not profess to speak to the public, like a learned member [Dr. Browne] on the other side, but should be content, whenever he was permitted, to speak to Parliament. The learned member had talked of the peace of the country ; another learned member had talked about exasperated sedition ; and a right honourable member about the responsibility bill—what the last had to do with a question of police, he knew not ; and he believed it would be as great mystery to the people out of doors, as it was to gentlemen within. However, he wished, for the sake of the people, that mention had been made (as formerly it used to be) of fugacious responsibility ; because, if they should be so lucky as to find out the meaning of one hard word by another, perhaps they might find out two things more : First, that none of the servants of the Crown are running away ; secondly, that there is nothing, as it appears in or about Dublin, so fugacious as a frightened patriot, if such men there be, who literally and actually are running away, and who seem to be crying out while they run ; a bill to render them responsible to Parliament, or to the pillory, would certainly be a bill proper enough to be mentioned. As to the peace of the country, who were they that disturbed it ? or would it be tranquilized by relaxing the police ? as to exasperated sedition, with whom was it to be found ? Look at the three descriptions of men, who make up the mass of what are called the people ; Church of England-men, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics : The Church of England-man is neither exasperated nor seditious, for his is the establishment ; nor is the Presbyterian so, who shares all the advantages of the establishment with him, and is not here, as in England, affronted and impeded by the Church-man's Test Act ; and surely the Roman Catholic is not exasperated nor seditious, for he now is emanci-

pated; declares he is grateful; and hitherto, at least, it might be said of the Roman Catholics, that the habits of their lives have been acquiescence; their politics have been monarchy, and their religion is peace.

Where then is the sedition which is so exasperated? I will tell you, he said, it is here in the capital; it is the capital which poisons the peace of the country; for here there is a fourth description of men, neither Protestant nor Catholic, but that accursed composition of character which seems rising in the world at present for its chastisement; which is made up of Irish impetuosity, French illumination, American cunning, and English obstinacy; it is a union of all the bad humours of all the distempered countries, with which the deliberations of that House can have any concern, and is comprehended under the title of the United Irishmen. They seem the descendants of that sect who came under their leader Cromwell to this country, where good things come later, and bad ones continue long; and here they have been rooted, and are flourishing in all the rank luxuriance of vulgar proselytism ever since, and here would, if they could, act over again the part their predecessors acted before; men to whom a meeting-house or a mass-house are just the same thing, for they despise all religion, and would destroy all government; but the religion they most despise is that which is called the Roman Catholic, and the government to which they are most hostile, is that where gentlemen obey a king. These are the men who hate peace more than any thing in the world, except a Papist; and who drink confusion to all crowns with a pleasure only to be equalled when they think of the downfall of the pope; these are the men, who to complete all, have the impudence and ignorance to think themselves united to Irishmen, to call the Catholics their brethren, and to offer them the kiss of peace with the Christianity of Judas. In short these, and these only, are the men who disturb your country and execrate your police. As to the patronage of the police, let it be annihilated if you please; it is a paltry consideration, and Government does not regard it; but while such men exist, never let its power for a moment be diminished.

Mr. BARRINGTON said, he had never before either spoken or voted upon the police question, and rose now, not so much to defend the system, as to refute the general charges of inconsistency and insincerity, with which gentlemen had endeavoured to involve the Government, through the medium of this question: it was not a question of great national importance, of commerce, or of constitution, but merely a paltry local matter of regulation. The system of the right honourable gentleman, and the present system, were intrinsically the same, one point of controversy only excepted, whether the crown or the common council should com-

mand an armed body? Would any man who loved his country presume to assert, that this was a time to wrest the controul of armed men from the executive power, and vest it in a democracy, by popular election? Was this a time to weaken governments, to enfeeble crowns, and transfer their power or their patronage to popular assemblies? If it was not, why the present measure? What is this dread of influence and patronage? Has the Government exerted influence to oppress the people? No, at the commencement of this session she was a drooping Government; dropping into the grave which had been dug for her; as much by the treachery of her friends, as the inveteracy of her enemies; and she derived re-animation from her measures, not from her influence; she was vigorous, she was watchful, she saved the country, she soothed the people, she gained their confidence, and she holds it; and it was a high gratification to gentlemen, who had been steady to his Majesty's government in hazardous and equivocal times, to find their exertions crowned with success; to have it acknowledged even by opposition: moderation and temper seemed to actuate every side, and it seemed a happy moment to Ireland, to have a Parliament whose only contest was, who should have the honour and the merit of its measures; why then this sudden change? Why this repentance of doing good? If gentlemen wish for a free and independent people, let them have a free and independent Government; a Government not forced to defend itself, either by the arms of influence, or the support of aristocracy, against the persecutions of an opposition. Did the opposition pursue no other objects than the public good, the sword of influence would rest in her scabbard, and patronage would become trifling, because it would become useless. But now gentlemen fearing that any support of Government would be dangerous to their popularity, and considering that no arrangements could include them all, first quarrel amongst themselves, and then with Government, and make this question, which neither concerns the state or the constitution, a pretence for a commencement of hostilities. But they can never regain their credit, it is too late; as they lose their consistency they lose their consequence; and one repenting sinner being better than ninety-nine just men, is the only claim they can now have to public merit.

He then went into a defence of the statement of Doctor Duigenan, and adverted to the several arguments on the other side. It had been said that this case of police commissioners might be as safely trusted to a corporation as any other officer. No—police commissioners would command a body of men trained and armed, ready to execute the orders of the commanders, that was not attached to any other office of a corporation. Let the corporation enjoy their civil rights, and the crown the military establishments; the constitution directs it so; the city is the cor-

poration's, but the peace is the king's, and the Parliament will not give an armed power into the hands of a popular body, many of whom are dangerous, and some are disaffected. An honourable member in stating his repentance, has like a will-bitted Arabian, played the curvet and the capriole, and the *terra a terra*, without advancing an inch; and another honourable member having recovered his panic, applied to his rhetoric and his tropes; he says the whole kingdom execrate the police, and so they do; by the figure synecdoche, that takes the whole for a part; and again he says, but a small part of the people will bear the institution; true, by the figure synchope, which takes a part for the whole. And how does the honourable member reconcile his sentiments this night with his sentiments last night? Why, by another favourite figure oxymoron,

"Where contradictions meet,

"And jarring epithets and subjects greet."

If gentlemen wished to have popularity, let them have it on their own merit; but that would not answer, they must derive it from their company. Some gentlemen have great political merit; some have little merit, and some have no merit; and in order to divide fairly, they form clubs and associations, and then they can club their merit, throw their talents into hotch-potch, and then every honourable gentleman may have a little merit and a little talent, upon an average; but this is a period every friend of Ireland should unite to support the King's government; and if the moderation and ingenuous conduct of gentlemen in opposition, was continued, he was assured the right honourable minister would meet them more than half way, to gratify the wishes of the city, modify the police establishment, if it wanted amendment, but leaving the supreme controul over it in the safest hands—the Crown.

On a division, the numbers were,

For the Speaker's leaving the chair	-	86
Against it	-	30
The bill of course was lost by a majority of	-	56

TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 1793.

The House sat in committee on the coal trade, Mr. VANDELEUR in the chair.

Mr. GRATTAN stated the purport of the resolutions which he intended to propose, which was, that a bounty of one shilling a

ton be granted to any person or company, who should store four thousand tons of coals for the purpose of sale, and that the bounty not to extend to more than 60,000 tons; and that any persons or company who should take a yard capable of holding 12,000 tons each, to be limited to four yards, should be paid a rent of 200*l.* not exceeding in the whole 800*l.* and that a bounty should be given for building lighters; and that whatever expences were to be incurred by this arrangement should be made good by the city.

This brought on a conversation, which lasted for near three hours, between Mr. GRATTAN, Mr. M'CARTNEY, the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD, Colonel BLAQUIERE, Mr. BURGH, Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE, the SPEAKER, Alderman WARREN, and Mr. JOHN WOLFE.

Mr. GRATTAN then moved the following resolutions:

"Resolved, that any person or company, who should take a yard capable of containing 12,000 tons of coals, and who shall store the same, for the purpose of sale, the rent of the same not to exceed the annual rent of 200*l.* shall be paid by this House; the number of yards to be limited to four, and the whole rent not to exceed the sum of 800*l.* the same to be paid whilst the said yards are kept for the storage and sale of coals.

"Resolved, that a bounty of one shilling, per ton, shall be given to any person or company who shall store four thousand tons of coals in the city of Dublin, for the purpose of sale.

"Resolved, that the quantity of coals to be entitled to this bounty shall not exceed 60,000 tons.

"Resolved, that a bounty shall be given to the first ten lighters or gabbards, which shall be built from the first of July next, and which shall give security to ply between the Light-house and the River Liffey, westward of Carlisle-bridge, and to the Grand Canal and Royal Canal.

"Resolved, that the expences of defraying the charges to be incurred by those regulations, shall be made good by a local tax levied in the city of Dublin."

Alderman WARREN strongly resisted the idea of laying any additional tax upon the houses of the citizens. He contended that it would be in the highest degree oppressive and unjust: oppressive, because they were already taxed beyond their ability; unjust, because coals which are burned for many miles around the city, are first brought to the port of Dublin: and he trusted no man would be found to assert that the citizens of Dublin ought, by an house-tax, to pay a bounty, in order that gentlemen in the neighbouring country might have their fuel cheap.

Mr. WOLFE replied—that it was equally unjust that people in the country should, by the tax on coals, pay for the improvement of Dublin; yet this was the fact in regard to the coal tax.

The SPEAKER could by no means consent to have the appropriated duty on coals diverted from its intention; the trustees of that fund had borrowed a large sum of money upon it, (100,000*l.*); public faith was of that delicate nature that it should not even seem to be violated: he, therefore, recommended that the bounties should be paid out of the ordinary revenue.

To this Mr. GRATTAN acceded; and the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER consented, under an assurance that whatever money was so drawn from the ordinary revenue, should in the next session be made good by a local tax (not on houses) in the city of Dublin.

Mr. M'CARTNEY said, that the subject was of great importance to the country; that the average import of coals into this kingdom, for the last three years, was upwards of 350,000 tons, and that the import into the city of Dublin alone, in the year 1792, was 196,989 tons; that a substitute for this monstrous export of the current coin, (for in that only did we pay for coals) was a grand feature in our political œconomy; that Parliament had many years ago granted, and still continued a bounty of two shillings a ton on all Irish coal brought to Dublin, but that, from the distant situation of our collieries from water carriage, that this bounty had hitherto failed of its intended effect; that turf, as a general fuel for the poor, and as an occasional fuel for the rich, was known to be an excellent substitute for coals; that in the three last years upwards of 30,000 tons of turf had been brought to Dublin, by the Grand Canal, and sold at so high a price as from one shilling and six-pence to three shillings a kish; that at present the Canal does not go through more than two miles of profitable turf bog, but that in less than two years the branch to the river Shannon, as far as Tullamore, will be finished, in which at least twelve miles of profitable turf bog will be gone through; that if Parliament should give a bounty of one shilling a ton on all turf brought to Dublin, which should be sold at a rate not exceeding fourteen pence a kish, it might induce companies to be established, with large capitals, to enter extensively into the coal or turf trade; that such establishments would operate to prevent fuel from ever rising to an extravagant price; would save to the kingdom the annual export of vast sums of our current cash; would afford constant employment to thousands of the industrious poor of all ages and descriptions; reclaim unprofitable and unwholesome bogs; people and fertilize extensive tracts of country, that are now barren and waste; and pro-

vide a constant supply, at the cheapest rate, of that article, which is at all times the best species of fuel for the poor, and, occasionally, the best species of fuel for the rich.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE observed, that the statement of the honourable member deserved the most serious attention of the House; that such a measure would meet the wishes of all the inhabitants of Dublin, and would unquestionably obtain the warmest support; and that he doubted not but that this House would give it its most cordial co-operation.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that the subject was of great importance, but that as it had not been so fully considered, as to form part of the system he had to lay before the House, he conceived it ought to be postponed until the sentiments of the city were more fully expressed upon it. For the present he should move only the resolutions he had at first proposed to the House.

The committee then agreed to Mr. Grattan's resolutions.

Mr. JOHN BERESFORD begged leave to call the attention of the House, to a measure of great importance to the revenues of the country. The present law for regulating the issuing of licenses for the retail of spirituous liquors would expire on the 29th of September next; it was necessary, therefore, to pass the license bill, with as much speed as possible. He said, he had called for the returns from the collectors, of the number of persons certified and licensed in each district. The papers were in the public offices, and they might be laid before the House, if thought necessary. In general, he found, that the provisions of the late act had been in few instances complied with, by reason of the non-attendance or the supineness of magistrates. In the county and county of the city of Dublin, there were but forty-three persons certified, and yet there were five hundred and four licenses granted. In the districts of Athlone and Roscommon, there were thirty-four certified, and one hundred and sixty licensed. In the whole kingdom there were but one thousand four hundred and forty-six certified, and four thousand three hundred and seventy were licensed, besides a considerable number granted in the last half year, which made the whole number upwards of five thousand. The only districts, where the provisions of the act were complied with, were Armagh, Coleraine, Drogheda, Dundalk, Kilkenny, Killybeggs, Lisburne, Letterkenny, Naas, Strabane and Waterford. In all other districts the proceedings were irregular. He said this to shew that the operation of the act, as it now stands, was insufficient for the purposes for which it was intended. He concluded with saying, that the papers in the Custom-house should be laid before Parliament, and then it would be known, what sort of bill was necessary.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 1793.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD presented a petition from Daniel M'Carthy, a postilion, now confined for 5000*l.* damages awarded against him for *crim. con.* praying to be included in the benefits of the insolvent act.

He then made a motion agreeable to the prayer of the petition; which was opposed by Mr. CURRAN, the Hon. DENIS BROWNE, Mr. BURGH and Mr. BARRINGTON; and supported by Mr. BERESFORD, Mr. MASON, and Colonel BLAQUIERE.

On a division, there appeared for the motion	-	17
Against it	-	51
Majority for rejection		34

Mr. FORBES rose, and introduced two resolutions relative to the measure, of establishing an effective and responsible treasury board in this country.

He set out with observing, that as ministers had intimated that they designed to postpone the introduction of a responsibility bill until the next session of Parliament; he and the gentlemen with whom he acted thought it necessary that the House should look for some security, as to the sincerity of their intentions on that subject, by way of resolution. They thought it the more necessary to do so, from the recent conduct of Administration, with respect to the police bill. They thought it necessary also, because ministers designed to bring forward their measure of a civil list, which was part of a plan in which the establishment of an efficient treasury board had been considered, as the principal object; because a limitation of the civil list would not be so beneficial as might be hoped, unless there were a responsible board to watch over the expenditure of that list as in England; and, lastly, it was necessary on account of the strange doctrines which had been promulged, relative to the absolute power of the Crown over the hereditary revenue independent of Parliament, a doctrine which could not be very mischievous, if such a board were established, whose consent should be necessary to the expenditure of that revenue.

Here he entered into a detail of historical facts, and shewed how the Crown, in the reign of Charles, came to acquire this pretended absolute power over the hereditary revenue, by the interference of Sir George Downing, who procured some clauses to be smuggled into the bills of supply, by which those revenues were vested in the Crown, beyond the controul of the Lord High Treasurer and Privy Seal, who, in some recent instances, had

refused to countersign his Majesty's warrants for money on the treasury.

The object of his motion was not innovation, but a restoring of the constitution of the treasury board in this country to its antient form—to complicate and involve as much as possible the issues of public money; for however true it was that, in general, simplicity in revenue and finance was a great merit, yet in the disbursements of the national treasure, the more complicated the issues, the greater was the security of the public.

He then entered into a detail of that antient constitution, and of the checks to which the issuing of public money was subject, from the various officers whose consent to each disbursement was necessary: these he contrasted with the present nugatory and dangerous system, where the vice-treasurer, the paymaster, and the receiver-general are generally the same person, and of course the salutary check which exists in England, is unknown. It has been the object of this bill to separate these offices, and, also, as an emanation of that measure, to institute an efficient board of public accounts; the present one, as well as the imprest accounts, being useless and futile. They might, indeed, examine very carefully the vouchers of the accounts that came before them; but into the reasonableness of the various expences, which was the principal object, they never inquired. Had the board been of this efficient kind, 200,000*l.* would not have been expended in a new Custom-house, at the uncontrolled will of the commissioners who were to occupy it.

In this bill too, there was a power vested in the board to enforce the due collection of the revenue, and to take care that the collectors paid in regularly what they collected. The benefit of this regulation, in England, has been found inestimable. Though their revenue was more than 3,700,000*l.* yet in twenty-five years there was lost by the failure of collectors no more than 3000*l.* whereas, in this kingdom, though its revenue was not one-third of that of England, there was lost in the same period a sum of 107,000*l.*

Gentlemen would say, perhaps, that the circumstances of the two countries were different, and prevented the same modes from being adopted in both. The year 1787 afforded an example, however, of the practicability of enforcing the payment of collectors' balances; for in that year the balances were reduced from 107,000*l.* to 26,000*l.* in consequence of the regulations of the Lords Justices.

He then urged, with great force, the necessity of adopting these salutary and æconomic measures at the present crisis, particularly when such enormous additions were made to the public burden; when the military force had received such unexampled encrease, and when the revenue of the country was in so low a state, that the receipts of the customs were unable to maintain

the clerks employed in the collection of them. Even if the war had not made new expences inevitable, yet the peace establishment would have needed reduction, the expenditure of the country having for some years uniformly exceeded its income 200,000*l.* per annum. He alluded to the fifteen places created by Lord Buckingham for the purpose, and urged the necessity of abolishing them. He disclaimed any idea of weakening Government by the measure he proposed; on the contrary, he wished to give them, really, that strength without doors, of which their new places, pensions, &c. only gave them, the appearance within that House.

He concluded by moving the following resolution: "That it is expedient to appoint commissioners of the treasury, of whom the Chancellor of the Exchequer to be one, who shall be responsible to Parliament for the issues of public money, and for the due application of such revenues as are, or shall, be appropriated by Parliament to particular uses; and who shall also be invested with a superintending controul over all officers employed in the collection and management of the revenue in this kingdom."

If this resolution should be adopted, he would then move another, for the abolition of all offices of more than 50*l.* per annum, created since a certain time.

The SECRETARY OF STATE observed, that by the constant rules of proceedings in Parliament, any member who declared his intention to bring forward a measure, was allowed to lay before the House the whole of his scheme; and that it was considered as contrary to parliamentary good breeding, that the ground should be pre-occupied, and the measure anticipated by any other member.

The observation was peculiarly applicable to measures, proposed by those gentlemen who conducted the business of Administration; and still more so to measures which, at their first communication, have been received with general approbation. It was the business of ministers to digest and arrange their plan, and of this House to approve, condemn, or correct it. The arrangement of the public treasury belongs to his Majesty, and is to be directed by him.

In this manner it begun in England, in the reign of King Charles the Second, when the treasury and admiralty were vested in commissioners appointed by the Crown; the legislature was not to be resorted to, unless for the purpose of aiding the executive power, if that should be found necessary. The measure intended by his Majesty's ministers, was the greatest concession that had ever been made by the Crown to the people; and while it strengthened the constitution and improved the finances of this country, was at the same time highly beneficial to his Majesty's government.

The nett hereditary revenue for the last year, ending the 25th of March, 1792, was 275,102*l.* and the gross amount 764,627*l.* which was reduced to so small a sum, by charging the whole expence of the collection and management of the whole revenue on this part of it; but when this comes to be considered no man could justify it. It arose at first from laying the additional duties, on those subjects of taxation from which the hereditary revenue arose. It afterwards became a pious fraud, to lay every possible charge on this fund, and with that view bounties and premiums to a very great annual amount were charged on it; which had reduced its amount.

To shew the value of this concession to the constitution, he observed, that the common law revenue of the Crown was the property of the King; but the disposal of it, like every other act of the executive power, was subject to the superintendancy, and if used for unconstitutional purposes, to the controul of Parliament; but that the King had the power to alien this revenue, appeared from the English acts of restraint and reassumption.

The King's common law revenue in this country, was of inconsiderable annual amount; the hereditary revenue was, as to some parts of it, given as a compensation for the common law revenue of the Crown. This was acknowledged, on all hands, as to two branches of this revenue; namely, quit rents and hearth-money; the first given in lieu of forfeited lands, and the second as a compensation for the abolition of the court of wards; but the other two great branches of this revenue, the excise and customs, were given as a purchase for the act of settlement; which appeared manifestly by a message delivered to the House of Commons, in the year 1662, from the Lords Justices, by Sir Paul Davis, his Majesty's principal secretary of state, "That they conceived it a duty to his Majesty, and incumbent on them, to suspend giving the assent to the great bill of settlement, until it should be accompanied with the other revenue bills;" meaning those for granting the hereditary duties.

Three parts out of four of the kingdom were at that time in a state of forfeiture. The utmost national distraction prevailed; to redeem themselves from this situation, they gave an hereditary revenue; they were forced to do it; and the King at the time relinquished forfeitures of a much greater value; he desired, however, not to be understood as defending those bargains between the Crown and the people. He thought them shameful on the part of the Crown; but such had been the conduct of the Stuarts.

The settlement of Ireland was a bargain; the *habeas corpus* act was a bargain; and the petition of rights not much better. This revenue having been granted to the King, his heirs and successors, many questions arose respecting the King's power over it. Some principles were clear; that the disposition of this re-

venue was in the King; that his letters and seals were the only authority for issuing it, and the only vouchers allowed by the commissioners of accounts, or the House of Commons; that it was vested in the Crown for public purposes; but that the support of the royal dignity was one of those purposes; and that over this, as over every other part of the executive power, the Houses of Parliament had a superintendancy.

Other points were disputed; it was said, the acts of excise and customs contained words of appropriation; the first having been granted for the pay of the army, and the second for guarding and defending the seas; but both those acts contain also general expressions; the first for defraying other public charges in the defence and preservation of the realm; and the second is also given for the increase and augmentation of his Majesty's revenue. There was no ground for calling this an appropriation; the idea had not been at that time entertained.

In about two years after passing those laws, Sir George Downing proposed his scheme of appropriation in England. Clarendon and Southampton highly disapproved; but it was a favourite measure of Charles the Second, who was flattered by Downing into an opinion, that by his appropriation his exchequer would become the bank of Europe; but no attempt was made to do this by a resolution of the House of Commons; it was done by a clause in an act of Parliament, specifying the purposes to which the money was to be applied, and containing negative words: this did not enlarge, but annihilated, the King's power over it.

Among the many contests which the hereditary revenue of Ireland had produced, it had been truly said, that parts of it, namely, those arising from hearth-money, and all licenses, were by those acts exempted, and discharged from pensions; and that by the English act of William the Third, quit-rents, in Ireland, were not to be charged with pensions, but to be reserved for the purposes of Irish government; and from hence it was inferred, that the grants of pensions being charged upon the whole revenue, were void; but the fact was mistaken, the grants having been out of such parts of his Majesty's revenue as are liable to the same.

A dispute had also arisen in the late reign, respecting the application of the surplus of the aggregate fund, consisting of the different branches of the revenue, including the hereditary, which had occasioned the greatest convulsion he ever remembered in this kingdom; and those dissensions occasioned another national grievance, namely, the great increase of pensions, which have grown from three thousand to one hundred and fourteen thousand pounds yearly; they have been the source of disputes during the whole of this century; the servants of the Crown never defended them, as has been supposed, on the principle that the King could dispose of the public revenue as he pleased; but

they urged that the support of his Majesty's crown and dignity, was a part of the public purposes, for which not only the hereditary, but the additional duties were granted; and as neither his Majesty, nor any of the kings of his family, had drawn any money from Ireland for that purpose; he was entitled to exercise his royal munificence in a reasonable extent, in the grant of pensions; but for his part, he always felt for the situation of the country, by the enormous encrease of those pensions, and had been in an early part of his life very much impressed, by an event which had taken place in this kingdom.

In 1757, the commons unanimously resolved, that pensions were a grievance, and demanded redress; and that this and other strong resolutions on the subject should be laid before the Lord Lieutenant, to be transmitted to the King: they were then little more than 40,000*l.* yearly.

In the two following years, there was an addition of 26,000*l.* yearly; but the same House of Commons, which had passed these resolutions, refused to interfere, which was a decisive circumstance to satisfy his judgment, that the power of granting, without limitation, ought not to be trusted to any minister; and that the power of the House of Commons was not a sufficient controul: he therefore thought the legislature ought to limit the amount: and as this hereditary revenue had occasioned a disuse of parliaments for 26 years, he thought the whole revenue ought to be appropriated; and from the first moment of his entering into the service of the public, he had recommended a civil list, properly so called, for the support of the King's crown and dignity—a limitation of pensions, and an appropriation of the revenue, what he thought all the statesmen and patriots of Ireland would never have been able to effect, and no British minister would have ventured to recommend what exceeded his expectations, and was not even within the horizon of his hopes—*volenda dies enattulit*.

He thought this was the only thing wanting to complete our constitution; and that when the measure was accomplished, this constitution would be perfectly assimilated to that of Great Britain; he therefore considered the communication of this measure as among the best tidings that had been ever brought to Ireland. The advantages to this kingdom with respect to its finances were evident; we should in a few years save under the head of pensions, 34,000*l.* yearly; and that in another respect an advantageous arrangement had been made for the country, by the perpetual acquisition of the profits of two great offices, amounting to 7000*l.* yearly, in exchange for pensions of equal amount, determinable by the lives of the present possessors; and it would now be easy to make estimates of the public expences, which was formerly impracticable.

This gracious concession would be found highly beneficial to his Majesty's government.

The hereditary revenue was really hereditary weakness; the representatives of the people gave their taxes with diffidence, and the payments were made with reluctance, from an apprehension that the produce may be applied to purposes very different from those for which they were given. The grants of the Crown were frequently the subject of severe observation, and sometimes of censure, in the House of Commons; and if the revenue proved insufficient for answering those and all other purposes of Government, it was in their power to have refused such a supply as would have enabled the Crown to have supported those grants. He therefore thought it more honourable for the Crown to have the sum limited, which pensions were not to exceed; and where an excess of that sum should become necessary, more decorous that the ministers of the Crown should previously apply to Parliament for its approbation, which on all proper occasions would be easily obtained.

This he understood to be one of the objects of the present arrangement. What that was to be he was not particularly informed, and desired that his observations should be understood, as applicable to the following principles—the establishment of a civil list for the crown; an appropriation of public revenue; a limitation of the sum, which pensions should not exceed, after they had been reduced by time to that limited sum; and that the revenue so appropriated should be vested in the commissioners of the treasury, who should be responsible for its application to the purposes ascertained by the legislature.

Such was the arrangement which had been stated, and which he had endeavoured to shew, would be a great improvement of the constitution of this country, and of its finances, and would at the same time give additional strength and dignity to the Government.

To remove a jealousy which had long agitated the public mind, had subsisted for near a century and a half, and had, during the present century, caused various dissensions, to promote confidence in the ministers, and the measures of the executive government; to redress the only grievance of which this nation had now any just cause to complain, and to effect those salutary purposes, by a gracious concession from the King to his people, must prove a great accession of strength to the government of a free country. Let us enumerate to our constituents, whom we are shortly to visit, the various blessings which we have obtained in a single reign, the limitation of our parliament; a free trade; the full participation of commercial intercourse with the British colonies in the West Indies and America; perfect security of personal liberty, by the Habeas Corpus act; the benefit of all treaties in their fullest extent to Ireland; the independence of our legislature; the independence of our judges; the establishment of our final judicature; the principle adopted of assimilating our con-

stitution with that of Great Britain; the place and pension bills; vacating the seats of certain pensioners and place-men, which will be the consequence of that principle; the comprehension of all our fellow subjects within the verge of the constitution; and the whole intended to be crowned by the appropriation of the revenue, the vesting of it in responsible commissioners, and the reduction and limitation of pensions; and all this effected, not by making bargains, as in the time of the Stuarts, but without any stipulation whatever on the part of the Crown.

He observed this last measure would appear the more gracious, when it was considered, that former monarchs would draw large sums of money out of Ireland for their personal use: it is said, that Edward III. had received no less than 50,000*l.* yearly from Ireland; Charles I. from 40,000*l.* to 50,000*l.* yearly; and Charles II. very considerable annual sums: but since the accession of the House of Hanover, not a guinea of the revenue of Ireland had been applied to the support of the royal dignity. Pensions had indeed been granted to some of the royal family; but of these no man had ever disapproved.

Among the national acquisitions he considered the militia act, the establishment of which institution in this country had, to his knowledge, been long resisted on the part of Great Britain, and opposed by different British ministers and Irish viceroys; as to the extension of this measure to great cities, he gave no opinion, but considered that mode of defence, for the kingdom in general, as the most constitutional of any that could be proposed.

In making this just representation to our constituents, let us desire them to look back to their former history, and see whether any period of our existence, as a country, was equal to the present, in every circumstance that constituted the happiness of a people; recommended them to look round the different nations of the globe, and then say, whether in any one country, Great Britain not excepted, there exist stronger reasons for general national contentment; and bid them beware of shewing any symptoms of disaffection any where, lest any man, envious of the happiness of Ireland, should ask—Will the people of that country never be satisfied? He said, that he had put himself more forward in this debate than was customary with him, because, from his advanced time of life, and long experience in the business of his Majesty's government, he had been more conversant in those subjects than any man who heard him; and in such of those events, as took place in the present reign, he had taken his part as one of his Majesty's servants.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, after some compliments to the Provost for the very handsome manner in which he had spoken of the measures of Administration, pronounced a panegyric on them himself. He stated the great advantages that would have resulted to this country had a limitation of the civil

list taken place twenty years ago. He did not hope by these measures, admirable as they were, to silence the clamours against Administration;—but those clamours would not, he trusted, mislead an intelligent people. They would see and acknowledge the importance of restoring to Parliament its controul over public money, and the appropriation of it to specific purposes. He would not immediately say No or Yes to any measure handed to him across the table; he would take time to consider it before he would pledge himself. The responsibility bill he postponed because the money bills were now passed;—the appropriation therefore could not take place this session, and without appropriation the board would be inefficient. The measure of limiting the civil list he brought forward in order to ease the public mind on that subject. If when this came before the House, as it would in a day or two, it should not appear a direct and fair measure coming fully up to what he had promised on that subject, he would claim no credit with the House; if, on the contrary, it should appear a direct and fair measure, he hoped the House and the nation would trust him for an equally fair and full performance of all he had promised with respect to the other measure.

As to the places created by my Lord Buckingham, he thought it absurd for gentlemen to be still hag-ridden by them, especially when there was a measure before them which would for ever prevent a repetition of the offence complained of.

With respect to the weakness of Government, which had been mentioned, he could not perceive it; there was every where about him an appearance of strength—it was on that account he now brought forward those measures, which, if they were conceded in different circumstances, might wear the appearance of originating in motives very different from the real ones which suggested them. Not being willing at this time to give either a negative or affirmative to the question now before the House, he moved the question of adjournment.

Mr. CONOLLY said, he had never been more astonished, since he first sat in Parliament, though he had often been very much astonished, than at hearing the question of adjournment moved to get rid of so plain and simple a resolution as that now proposed. If the House were affrighted at this proposition, none ought ever to be proposed for their decision;—if, fraught as ministers were with systems and arrangements from the other side of the water, they were afraid to meet this question, Parliament was but a joke, and the people would think as meanly of it as he did. The country, gentlemen knew, was in a very calamitous situation, and what did the minister propose to do in order to relieve it?—Erect a new board!—It was to be a treasury board!—to protect the public money now, when there is not a guinea left to guard. If this was not trifling, he knew not what was. He warned ministers that conduct like this might lead the country into a dilem-

ma out of which it would not be easy to extricate it. The French monarchy might yet have stood, had not the extravagance of its administration reduced it to bankruptcy. If public plunder should induce national poverty, the consequence might be fatal: he called public plunder every shilling which was taken from the purse of the people without being necessary to the real and honest exigencies of the state.—He opposed the question of adjournment.

Mr. WILLIAM BURTON CONYNCHAM agreed that the constitution of the treasury board in this country was antiently the same as that of the English board; but at that time there was no appropriation of revenue in either country; when the appropriation took place in England, from thence, the constitution of the two boards was the same no longer. As the Irish revenue is to be now appropriated the similarity may again be established. He asserted that the less frequent intercourse between the capital and the country in Ireland, rendered it less easy than in England for collectors to remit their balances, and besides it was necessary that the collectors should retain money in their hands to answer the calls for pay of the army in the country.—As to himself and his colleagues of the treasury nothing could be more grateful to them than that the issues and receipt of money there should be put precisely on the same footing as they are in England.

Mr. WILLIAM BRABAZON PONSONBY was against getting rid of this question by adjournment. He did not wish to derogate from the merit of ministers in bringing forward these measures, but he knew they would all be incomplete if not crowned by this great one, the establishment of responsibility in the servants of the Crown.—By withholding their assent from the resolution, they taught the public to believe they were not sincere in their professions on that subject. As to the compensation to be made for bringing home of the vice-treasurerships, he could not see the necessity of that measure. Was it, he asked, because those offices had been unfairly taken out of the kingdom, that, therefore, the country should pay for the restoration of them? and that too at a time when the country was about to be burdened by a new board. He thought it was poor in the British minister to look for compensation for those officers, and however good the measure he should concede might be, this would tarnish the lustre of it. As to the new places to which his honourable friend had alluded, they were created for the worst of purposes, to reward those who had insulted the dignity of Parliament; and if Parliament had a due sense of its dignity, it would insist on the abolition of these places.

Mr. C. COOTE asserted the efficacy of the board to which he belonged, that of impress accounts; and said, he examined every

year most minutely into the expenditure of half a million: was against the resolution, as calculated to anticipate ministers, and to strip them of the laurels they had earned.

Mr. VANDELEUR, in support of the resolution, entered very much at large into the necessity of a responsible treasury board, and trod much of the ground which Mr. Forbes had gone over before.

Mr. CLEMENTS pledged himself to prove that the different circumstances of the two countries rendered the ideas of gentlemen on the subject of enforcing the collectors balances absolutely impracticable.—The collectors could not, as in England, transfer their balances in negotiable paper, for none such occurred in the country; and as a proof of this, he said, he was obliged to send a messenger to the North three days ago, in order to bring up hard cash to answer for the pay of the troops in the country, who could not be paid by bank remittances, because the bank notes were not negotiable in the country without paying discount.

Mr. JOHN O'NEIL thought the time of the committee was mispent by entering into the detail of a business not yet fully before the House.—He had heard with pleasure from ministers a description of the measure they intended to bring in, and he thought there never had been a time when gentlemen might so truly tell their constituents they were in a fair way to receive every advantage they could reasonably look for.—He was of opinion the House should give ministers time to introduce their measure; the resolution, he thought, would not at all facilitate that introduction, and therefore he was for the adjournment, not considering it however as by any means implying a negative on the resolution.

Mr. JOHN BERESFORD entered into a long statement of Parliamentary orders relative to the New Custom-house, in order to exculpate the commissioners for their conduct with respect to that building.—He also answered some parts of Mr. Vandeleur's speech, in which he had touched on the enormous expence of collecting the revenue in this kingdom.

He shewed that this expence must necessarily be greater here than in England, because the commerce of this country being less, the percentage on the collection of the revenue must necessarily be more, as the same number of men would collect a large revenue for the same salary as a smaller. Hence it happened that in Scotland, whose commerce was still smaller than that of Ireland, the revenue was collected at the rate of 33 per cent. He said, that much of the money, which by the accounts appeared to

be in the collectors hands, never had been there, but was money merely on paper which had never existed. As for the conduct of the revenue board, he challenged any gentleman to lay his finger on any item of expence in their accounts which was exceptionable. He courted enquiry on that subject, and concluded by supporting the question of adjournment.

Mr. GRATTAN, in reply to Mr. Beresford said, he did not wish now to enter on the invidious task of pointing out exceptionable items in the revenue accounts, though some of them certainly appeared to him highly objectionable : he was unwilling to do so for two reasons, because there was now another question before the House, and because the enquiry might be courted now, as in time past, rather to obtain the sanction of the House to expenditure of a doubtful kind, than fairly to justify that expenditure. — It appeared useless too, to bring before Parliament any question on the conduct of the board of revenue, while there were so many offices of revenue, &c. in the House.

He differed from Mr. O'Neill as to the resolution ; he thought it peculiarly necessary now as the bill was to be postponed till next session, and in the mean time another measure nearly, connected with that bill, was to be brought forward.

The measure as it had been stated by ministers appeared a good one ; but many things might happen in the course of eight months which would render the attainment of it dubious. Why then would gentlemen praise the measure, and yet reject the resolution that records it ?

If the resolution were refused, the public would have nothing to rely on but the honour of the right honourable Secretary. That right honourable gentleman certainly took on him a very great responsibility by rejecting the resolution proposed, for if any thing should occur before next session of Parliament which would render him unable to carry his measure, he would then stand in a very awful situation. It was not the intention of his honourable friend to pilfer the merit of the measure by his resolution : he only meant to record the sentiments of ministers themselves on the subject, and to deliver them from the embarrassments of domestic intrigue.—From what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman, [Mr. Clements] it seemed as if gentlemen apprehended difficulty in establishing in Ireland the analogy of the British constitution as it respects the treasury.—He would therefore wish it should be understood that if a board of treasury should be instituted, that board should possess the same full power over the issues, receipts and collection of the public money as in England. If gentlemen would promise this, he would be the less concerned at the question of adjournment.

Mr. DUQUERY agreed in the sentiment with Mr. Grattan; he thought it more necessary that this promise should be made, as two days since they decided the expectations of the public on the police bill.—He lamented it as an error in his conduct and a misfortune in his life, that he had for two sessions silently opposed this bill. He blushed when he had read the bill of his honourable friend; that he could for a moment have opposed it. He however at last saw his error—and repented: the gentlemen at the other side were beginning to repent also of their opposition to it.—The resolution proposed he thought the best test of their sincerity.—It would secure themselves against the difficulties that might occur from the cabal of inferior officers, it would record their sentiment to a succeeding administration if a change should happen in the interval before the next session, and above all it would pledge the House to the measure.—He thought it no bad time now to pledge itself to a measure of this kind; now that the treasury, plundered in peace, was empty at the commencement of a war, and came a suppliant to the public in *forma pauperis*.—He observed, that there never was a country whose liberty was secure if its treasure was not protected.—What was the case in Ireland?—Why if every guinea was taken from the exchequer, every officer concerned in the management of the public treasure could say:

“ Shake not thy hoary locks at me.

“ Thou canst not say ’twas I that did it.”

If gentlemen really designed to bring forward this measure, what harm can the resolution do them? If indeed they wish to keep themselves unpledged to the measure, they were certainly right in opposing the resolution.—Gentlemen on the other side were accustomed to cry—“ Rally round the throne!”—“ We will,” say the gentlemen on the opposite side—“ but let us rally also round the constitution”—Oh! replied the ministers, we’ll adjourn that question. This, he could not help saying, looked like a design to dupe the country. Smothered discontent every body knew existed in this country;—the way to remove it was to shew a disposition on one side of the House to strengthen the Crown, and on the other, no wish to filch from the constitution.—A defective place bill, a mutilated pension bill, and a refused responsibility, for the rejection of this resolution would be considered as a refusal, and would not do. To reject the resolution would look as if it had been determined in England that Ireland, if she wished a constitution, should pay roundly for it, and that therefore this measure was kept back in order that it might be sold to the people next session for as much as possible. This he called setting up the constitution at auction. If gentlemen were serious in their promises of a responsibility bill, they would agree to this resolution; it was the only measure which appears as the olive branch.

Mr. HOBART repeated that no bargain whatsoever had been made in England for any measures that had been proposed. He professed himself highly pleased at the sentiments which had been expressed by a right honourable member [Mr. O'Neill] and thought they did him the highest honour. In proposing the question of adjournment gentlemen, he said, did not object to the resolution, but wished to keep the measure to be brought forward, clear from all clog or embarrassment of previous resolution; and as to making promises on that subject, he submitted to the House, if it were not right to be pledged by resolution, it would be wise to bind the House or Administration by the speech of any gentleman.—The measure was a difficult one, and to make and to promise any thing on the subject might subject gentlemen hereafter to the imputation of breaking faith with the public, if they should be unable to carry their resolution into effect. The House, however, might be assured that the right honourable gentleman who brought forward the statement of measures to be adopted would not have done so if he were not convinced of the sincerity of the gentlemen with whom he acted on that subject.—He suggested the withdrawing of the motion.

Mr. CURRAN followed, and with energy and fire opposed the adjournment, and supported the resolution.

Mr. FORBES rose, and asked, whether gentlemen would say that this board when established should be invested with the same powers as the English treasury board? He waited for an answer.—None was given. Then said he, I see that this board is designed as a job, and that the whole of the business is collusion.—He warmly reprobated this duplicity of ministers, and concluded by replying, to the various arguments that had been adduced against the resolution.

The question of adjournment being now put, it was carried in the affirmative without a division.

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1793.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD presented the revenue bill; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Saturday next, and to be printed.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD presented a bill for the preservation of the inland fisheries; which was read a first time.

On the order for the second reading of the India bill,

The Hon. Mr. STEWART spoke much in favour of the principle on which it was founded, that of concession to Great Britain, when the concession was not injurious to Ireland. He expatiated on the benefits that were secured to Ireland in the bill, by the liberty granted of exporting 800 ton of Irish manufacture. He hoped the bill in every stage of its progress would pass with unanimity.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he would not now give any opinion on the bill; he would reserve himself for a future discussion, which he hoped would be fixed for some day next week. In the mean time he would not oppose the second reading.

Mr. O'NEILL spoke of the bill in very favourable terms, as did also the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER and Mr. HOBART.

Mr. GRAYDON urged the necessity of consulting the mercantile interest on the provisions of it, and therefore wished a distant day to give an opportunity for communication.

The bill was then read a second time, and ordered for commitment on Wednesday next.

FRIDAY, JUNE 28, 1793.

The House resolved into committee to take into further consideration the election bill; Mr. FLOOD in the chair.

On the clause which enacts, that every member returned to serve in Parliament shall, previous to taking his seat, swear, that he has not either by himself or any other person, given or promised any bribe for the purpose of procuring votes, and that if any such promises have been made by any person for or on his behalf, he will not make them good, a short debate took place.

Mr. GRATTAN said, that without some such provision as this, all the other provisions against corruption, which could possibly be devised, would be useless and nugatory.

Sir HENRY CAVEDISH and Colonel BLAQUIERE opposed the oath; the former principally resting on the supposition that the only tendency of such a regulation would be to keep out of the House the conscientious and honourable man, while the unprincipled and irreligious would find admission.—The other, that it was founded on a principle that smelled strongly of democracy, and tended to subvert kingly government.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE argued against the clause on the same principle, and also opposed postponing the consideration of it, which had been suggested.—He wished it should be immediately put and rejected.

Mr. EGAN was for postponing the clause, though friendly to it; but from the impropriety of discussing and determining on such a clause as this in the present thin attendance of the House, he argued against the propriety of introducing the bill at all at this time. He said, the clause aimed at a subordinate reform of Parliament, though the honourable mover had assured him, on a former occasion, it contained nothing on that subject.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE endeavoured to shew from the title of the bill, which was, “for regulating elections,” that this clause could not now be put, as it related not at all to the election of members, but to something subsequent thereto. But even if this objection were not valid, he should object to the clause, and the discussion of such a question.—This, he thought, was not precisely the time for disparaging parliament; but, on the contrary, every thing should be done to support its dignity.

Mr. GRATTAN defended the clause. He shewed it was perfectly consistent with the title of the bill. If, in order to regulate elections, it was right and relevant to bind the elector that he should not receive a bribe, it surely was not less so to bind the elected that he should not administer one;—if this were not the case, and if some such clause as the present were not adopted, it would look as if the law was levelled rather against the vices of the poor man than those of the rich, as it would constitute criminality in the poor man for being bribed, and not in the rich for bribing. The argument then drawn from the inconsistency of the clause, with the title of the bill, fell to the ground.—The argument that it “disparaged” Parliament was not more valid than the other. One individual, he observed, could not disparage another; he might indeed attack him, but the man must disparage himself; he must himself do something mean or dishonourable. So it was with Parliament; and in his mind, the man who endeavoured to induce the House to negative such a proposition as this, would do more toward disparaging Parliament, than the man who openly accused it of corruption.—What indeed, could the public think of an assembly who would reject an oath of this kind, by which the member disclaimed only that he did not get a seat among them by the means the most vile and dishonourable? The idea that the oath would exclude only the conscientious, while it would admit the libertine, was equally futile as the other reasons that had been urged against the clause; because very heavy pains and penalties were inflicted by the bill on those who

should be found guilty of perjury, and in a case which must necessarily be matter of notoriety, which indeed it must be almost impossible to keep secret, no man would hazard so much. He deprecated strongly the rejection of the clause, though he might consent to its postponement.

General CONYNGHAM declared himself in very manly language a friend to the clause. He was equally adverse to corruption in the elected as in the electors, and therefore was willing to guard as strictly against it in one as in the other. It appeared to him matter of little moment why or how the clause was introduced, or whether it corresponded with the title of the bill or not; it appeared to him an useful clause, and should have his best support.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE professed himself a friend to the clause, because coming in conjunction with a place bill, and a pension bill, it would tend to supersede the necessity of every other species of reform;—and thus would prevent the danger of what he always dreaded in the plan of reformation, namely, the introduction of individual representation.

The clause was postponed; and shortly after the Chairman reported progress to the House, and obtained leave to sit again.

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 1793.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD, that the committee on the revenue bill be empowered to receive a clause, to subject lump sugar broken, to the same duty as loaf sugar.

Ordered, on the motion of Mr. Secretary HOBART, that the said committee be empowered to receive a clause, to exempt from the tax on absentees, certain persons, under certain descriptions.

Ordered, on the motion of Alderman WARREN, that the said committee be empowered to receive a clause, to empower the commissioners of his Majesty's revenue to appoint a deputy craner, in case of sickness or other unavoidable cause of absence.

Sir ANNESLEY STEWART presented a petition from the inhabitants of Eccles-street, praying that they may be exempted from the provisions and clauses of the parish bill now under the

consideration of the House; which was received, read, and referred to the committee on the said bill.

The Hon. DENIS BROWNE presented a bill to amend the act for the better securing the payment of banker's notes, and for providing a more effectual remedy for the security and payment of debts due by bankers; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Tuesday next; to which day the House adjourned.

TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1793.

Read a third time, and passed, the bill for the regulation of his Majesty's marine forces while on shore.

Several petitions were presented against persons being admitted to the benefit of the insolvent bill; which were referred to the committee on the petition of Richard Neville.

Mr. GRATTAN, after a short conversation with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, moved, that an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that he would lay before his Majesty the humble desire of this House, that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to order the sum of 4000*l.* for the purpose of completing the buildings of the New House of Industry, and that this House would make good the same.

This motion was agreed to.

Reported the bill for constituting a new parish in this city, to be called the parish of St. George, and for building a parish church thereon.

Mr. WYNNE moved a clause to prevent burials of persons, who should die in said parish, in any other place of interment but in the burial ground specified in the bill; which brought on a conversation between Mr. HOBART and the ATTORNEY GENERAL. In the course of the conversation the great nuisance of permitting burying grounds in great cities was admitted; and it was understood that the subject would be taken up on a future day. Mr. Wynne's clause was negatived; as was a clause, moved by Doctor Browne, to charge the parish with a provision of 200*l.* a year for the Rev. John Barker, who officiates at present in St. George's church.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL moved a clause, that nothing in the bill should affect the rights of the corporation of the city of Dublin, or parish of Canturke; which was agreed to.

The bill was then ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. GRATTAN moved, that the committee on the revenue bill be empowered to receive a clause, to regulate the sale of malt and barley brought coastways to the city of Dublin.

Ordered accordingly.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 1793.

Mr. GRATTAN said, before the House should resolve itself into committee on the East India bill, he would take the liberty to state to the House some ideas on the subject of East India commerce; which could not so properly be delivered in the committee, and also some observations on the relative situation of the countries; after which he would conclude by proposing a resolution for their concurrence.

He thought it the more necessary to be explicit on this subject now, as the probability was, that this was the last opportunity that would occur for saying any thing on commercial arrangement: an error committed now was likely to be permanent, for after the concessions made by the bill, Ireland would have nothing more to concede, and therefore, in the ordinary course of things, could have nothing more to hope.

As to the general principle that this country should submit her particular interests, in some degree, to the promotion of the interests of the empire at large, he, for one, was willing to accede to it. The question that remained then was, whether the commercial intercourse between the two countries was so settled as ought to give general content. If that intercourse were so settled, he would agree to the measure proposed by the bill, however strong it might be.

He then entered into a chain of reasoning to shew the importance of the surrender, which the bill made to Great Britain; proving that Ireland was not only capable of carrying on a trade to the East, but such a trade as must greatly encrease her wealth and promote her manufactures.

The arguments which had been advanced against this position on former occasions, he opposed; the first was, that this country could never export any articles of manufacture to the countries beyond the Cape of Good Hope; for that Great Britain with all her power and capital could not export any. On that occasion, an honourable friend of his had stated, that 50,000*l.* were at that time exporting, and he was answered that these were for the use of the British settlements only. On enquiry he had found that they were for the general India market. He could prove it

from authentic documents that the export trade existed, and was encreasing to a very great degree. He then read an extract from the India Company's accounts, by which it appeared, that the amount of the exports of manufacture to India

In the year 1786 was	-	£. 243,000
———— 1787 —	-	290,000
———— 1788 —	-	384,000
———— 1789 —	-	356,000
———— 1790 —	-	440,000

and that they had continued to go on encreasing to the present year.

It had been asserted also, that there was no market in China for British manufactures: he shewed from documents similar to the former, that the export trade to China was also an encreasing trade, and amounted in the last year to upwards of 600,000*l*.

The exports then to India and to China, amounted to a million, exclusive of the private trade, which was known to be 600,000*l*. more; and this trade was an export, principally of articles which Ireland either does or may produce—woollen manufacture, hard-ware, glass, saddlery, shoes, &c.

A second argument had been advanced that the nature of the imports of the Eastern trade, made it a bad trade, they being chiefly articles of luxury. This he controverted, for some of those articles were the primum of manufacture, and some were necessaries, viz. cotton, raw silk, sugar and tea. The last article was sold by the company, much dearer than in many other parts of Europe; this he proved by a statement in figures of the relative prices of tea in London, and in the different markets of Europe in the year 1787. Ireland, then, in dealing with this company exclusively, lost very considerably by this article. As to cotton, that of India was the cheapest kind, and though its quality had been spoken against, yet the fineness and excellence of the manufactures which were made of it, were a full proof of its excellence. By confirming to the company a monopoly in this article, they vested in them a complete power over the cotton manufacture of this kingdom.

In the article of sugar, the East Indies had considerably the advantage over the West; East India sugar selling from 17*s*. to 26*s*. per cwt. while that of the West Indies sold at 58*s*. per cwt. and even the price of 26*s*. was paid for India sugar only, because the planters had not been prepared for the demand. As labour was infinitely cheaper in the East, than in the West Indies, that article could always be had much cheaper there. Giving to the company then a monopoly in this sugar trade, Ireland gave to Great Britain an absolute power over her trade in sugar; and in giving her that, she gave her a power of destruction over the West India trade; for that trade could be carried on by this

country only, so far as she could take the sugar of the West in return for her manufactures.

The greatest commercial authorities had declared, that a trade to the East might be made beneficial in the highest degree; the act of the British minister in sending an embassy to China, at a very enormous expence, was a proof that he was of the same opinion.

He confessed that it appeared to him very strange, that the British minister was engaged in the very act of sending out this embassy, at the moment when, by his friends in the Irish Parliament, he was endeavouring to persuade them that this very trade which he was taking so much pains to secure was good for nothing—a losing or an impracticable trade. Mr. Smyth, the first authority on such a subject, had pointed out the very great value of a trade to the East; his argument was a simple one, and he had never yet heard it answered. He said, it were absurd to suppose that a trade with the savages of North and South America could be beneficial, if that to the East were not so in a much higher degree: it would be to assert, that a commerce with barbarism and poverty, could be more lucrative than that with abundance, industry and civilization. It was the instrument by which that trade was carried on in England, an exclusive company that prevented its benefits from appearing. The same author, he said, corrected another vulgar error that prevailed, and which had also been stated as an objection to opening the trade, namely, that the trade carried only export of bullion, must necessarily be an unprofitable one. First, bullion was, like other commodities, an article procured by the labour of men, and therefore was a species of manufacture. Secondly, the circumstance of the export of bullion in this trade was exaggerated from the current of prejudice being against the company, which, therefore, every man endeavoured to make as odious as possible; and, thirdly, even if the export were not only bullion but cash, the trade might be still a lucrative one, from the manufacture of the raw material brought home, and the subsequent exportation of them in a manufactured state.

If it could be supposed that trade with a nation rich and cheap in labour were not beneficial, then trade itself must always be a disadvantageous thing, for if it were not profitable in these circumstances, it could not be so in any. But the error was here, that gentlemen supposed that in commerce if one nation gained, the other must necessarily lose; whereas, both may be gainers, and always are so when both are fitted for commerce.

The argument drawn from the export consisting principally in bullion, was founded on what was not fact; for the truth was, that the export of bullion had for some years been gradually decreasing, and in the last year amounted to no more than 600,000*l.*; which so far from being the whole of the exports to the East,

did not constitute more than one-third of them : and even on this export, the company, as on merchandize, made a profit of ten pound per cent. as he proved by documents from the company's authenticated papers.

It had been said also, that to embark in Eastern commerce would be a mischievous distraction of the small capital of the country. Our capital, he said, was already distracted, for we are now obliged to pay ready money to the company for our teas, and not only so, but for the duties, &c. in addition; whereas, if the trade were opened, we might be able to export teas perhaps in considerable quantities, and an influx of English ex-charter capital would take place, which would completely remove that objection.

It had been stated too, that the trade, though it might be beneficial to the individual, would be injurious to the country. This, he thought, could not be; for no man would engage in the trade if he could not undersell the company, and so far as he undersold them, he rendered the public service.

The expence attending this distant trade had been mentioned as an argument against opening it. He observed that we are now obliged to pay to the company this expence, which was not less than 100*l.* per cent—a circumstance which proved two things.

1. That the trade must be very lucrative indeed, which could support such an expence.

2. That the medium of the East India Company is the dearest medium through which this trade could be carried on.

As to the argument that Ireland could not carry on this trade for want of settlements, &c. this, he thought, was refuted by the case of America, who had carried on the trade prosperously without any settlements. The truth was, that Irish ships would be received into the ports even of the English, and suffered to trade there, paying the alien duty, as every other nation in Europe did.

Every argument then, which went to prove that Ireland was incapable of the trade, or that the trade was a bad one, being thus found false, it remained, that Ireland agreeing to this bill, made a very great and important sacrifice indeed. He then adverted to the regulations of the bill; that 800 tons of shipping should be ready annually for the export of Irish goods for the ports of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta; that the merchant should give notice six day before the sailing of said ship of his intention, and also should send a minute of his goods. If the country were not able to carry on the trade when free and unlimited, how came it to pass, he asked, that she would be able to carry it on under all those limitations as to quantity, &c.

Did these limitations work a miracle? As to the returns, what were they to be? Nothing immediately to this country; if any

returns, they were to go to London, and then perhaps to be re-shipped for Ireland, but under such circumstances as rendered the idea of trade to Asia absurd. The bill then was a complete dereliction of the Eastern trade; the hopes of the country on that head were sunk for ever.

To England, as an instrument of empire, he said, the India Company was eminently beneficial; it added annually 7,000,000*l.* sterling to the capital of the country; it employed continually tonnage to the amount of 81,000 tons: hence the manufactures of England shared its good effects. Did Ireland receive any benefit from this? None whatsoever. The argument, that Ireland derives as much benefit from the trade as Great Britain, falls to the ground; she did not even share it in the smallest degree.

On the whole, however, if this country could not exercise this trade without shaking the fundamentals of British commerce, or alarming the apprehensions of commercial men in England, it would, he thought, be better to give up the trade, and cultivate a commercial equality with England in other respects. But then the commercial settlement between the two countries, in all other instances, both as to foreign and domestic trade, should be perfectly impartial. As to foreign goods he confessed it was so already by the recent measures of the British Commons, a measure which, for the manner in which it was carried on, he highly applauded, as it left the legislature of this country unshackled. But where did this equality exist as to the native produce? Where was the principle of reciprocal admission there? It existed not; for some manufactures were excluded from Great Britain, which here were freely admitted. This he liked not. The propositions, in this respect, were founded on the true principle; they proposed a system of perfect equality, and, setting aside the revenue part of them, they met his hearty concurrence. The advantages however, great as they were, were not worth a sacrifice of the constitution.

It would have been happy therefore if, when the subject was agitated, ministers on both sides of the waters had gone a little farther, and in order perfectly to remove commercial jealousy had placed the countries, in this respect, on the same footing; the more so because since the time of the propositions a treaty had been made with France, granting to that country very considerable advantages over Ireland. This event must naturally give pain to Ireland, but it must also remove the apprehensions of the English manufacturers, that they would be injured by concessions to Ireland, which they have found were productive of no such consequences from France. Hence it made it more necessary and more easy for the minister to place both countries on the same level. Such a measure was now become necessary to the honour of both countries; to Ireland, as she cannot tamely submit to those deprivations, and to England as she is now bound to remunerate the

favours we were conferring so liberally and cheerfully ; as preliminary to this necessary and desirable measure, he would therefore move the following resolution :

“ That for the purpose of encouraging and extending the commerce between this country and Great Britain, and in order to regulate the same on the principle of commercial equality, it is expedient that the manufactures of this country should be admitted into Great Britain on the same terms on which similar manufactures are admitted into this country from Great Britain.”

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER replied to Mr. Grattan. He did not hesitate to declare, that this question of commercial equality was not at all in consideration on a late occasion, as well on account of the advanced period of the session, as from the experience of former essays combining these two subjects in one negotiation, having been found ineffectual. It was for those reasons he thought it better to treat the questions separately. When, however, this subject should come properly before the House, it should have his best wishes and support.

He thought it unnecessary however now to determine on the question, as the sense of the House was already known on it, the resolution being but an extract from the propositions to which the House had agreed. It would also be unwise now to adopt any such resolution, which should look like introducing a bargain. No man, however, could argue against the principle of the resolution ; and when it should be brought forward at a proper time it should have his feeble aid.

As to the general system of reasoning which the right honourable gentleman had entered into, he generally agreed to it, particularly to that position that we should not exercise even a valuable and practicable trade, if it would materially affect the interests of Britain, or shake those public opinions on which commerce so peculiarly rests. With respect to the general position, that in agreeing to the bill this country gives a great deal, it had been admitted by the right honourable gentleman who introduced the bill ; he had admitted the capacity of the country to profit by the trade, and therefore had solicited the surrender of it as a favour.

But though he agreed in this idea, yet he would not agree in the statement of the right honourable gentleman, as to the benefits of this trade in the extent in which he had laid them down. That statement was an ingenious one, but it exaggerated the favours conferred in Great Britain, while it depreciated the benefits she had bestowed on this country. It tended therefore to aggravate the feelings of the people, and, therefore, it was that he found himself obliged to combat it.

He then entered into a minute consideration of Mr. Grattan's arguments: he granted that an export of woollens from England to the East did take place, but then the adventure was a losing one, as he shewed from a statement of that trade laid before the company, by which it appeared that the loss on the article of woollens alone, in the space of five years, amounted to 82,516*l*. There was also an export trade of naval stores and tin to the East, but those articles Ireland had not to export; she could not therefore participate the trade in any articles but woollens, and the trade in these was a losing one.

It had been asked, how the country would be enabled to carry on this trade when limited, if she were incapable of it when thrown open? He answered, by the company becoming the carrier of our goods on lower terms than we could carry them ourselves: thus the limitation to 800 tons secured to us a part of the trade, which we could not otherwise have enjoyed.

It had been said the trade to the East, to China and Japan, those wealthy, skilful and civilized people, must be beneficial: in his opinion, the very circumstance of their being skilful in manufacture would render us unable to enter into competition with them in manufacture.

The bullion trade, it had also been said, was not so losing a trade as had been represented; yet the trade to the East was certainly a very slow trade, and if we were unable to profit by the West India trade; from an inability to wait the returns for our linens, what could we be expected to do in Eastern trade, where the returns must be infinitely more tedious?

The American trade, the great success of which had been relied on, was now, he said, in a state of rapid decline, and would probably share the fate of all the other experiments which had been made in trading to the East: and as to the embassy, it might be considered as an embassy from this country, as she is by particular provision entitled to participate all the advantages which may result from it.

The objection that had been made against the company, as being the worst instrument of that trade, was answered by the right honourable gentleman himself; for he had stated, that this company acquired wealth for itself, brought home revenue to the Crown, and diffused industry through the country.

With respect to the right of trading to the British settlements subject only to the alien duty, that existed only at the pleasure of the company, and might if they pleased terminate before next year; for every country has a right to regulate the trade to her own ports, and exclude from thence what trade she pleased; and it could not be supposed the company would long permit us to resort to her territories, if they found us likely to become a dangerous rival.

He contended, that by the bill Ireland was enabled to profit by the trade, as much as ex-charter subjects of Great Britain; if there were any difference it was in favour of Ireland, for besides the advantages which she derived from the trade of the company in common with the people of England, she had a portion of that trade, by the bill, secured to herself. The best way, he asserted, for Ireland to aim at profiting by Asiatic trade was first to begin it, as now, under the auspices and protection of Great Britain; after some time, when she was become acquainted with the trade, she might then set up for herself. As to the necessity of getting the returns from Asia circuitously through London, he thought that inconvenience was much more than compensated, by the low price at which the freightage outwards was fixed by the bill.

On the whole, this country gave up little by the bill, and gained from Britain what is much more valuable. What was conceded by Ireland, though little valuable to her, was yet of the utmost importance to Great Britain; and at this crisis when the very existence of the two countries depended on their connection, the concession was particularly well timed.

As the general principles on which this bill rested were agreed to by the right honourable gentleman himself, there was little need of more reasoning on the subject. He must, however, observe, that it was unfair to state the capital acquired by the trade to Asia as confined to Great Britain: the fact was not so; more purchases had been made in this country within the last ten years, by capitals acquired in the East, than all the other purchases put together.

He concluded by moving the order of the day.

The SECRETARY OF STATE paid some handsome compliments to the oratorical ingenuity of Mr. Grattan, and the splendid tour he led the House through India and China. It was the property of a great orator to take up his audience, and drop them where he pleased.

Mode Thebis mode Athenis.

If the question his right honourable friend moved, was put, he should certainly give it the affirmative; but he hoped it would not be pressed, because he thought it ought not to anticipate the bill now before the House; a bill by which the House were going certainly to confer a great favour on England; it was at the same time to mark their liberal and magnanimous sense of the conduct of England; who had conceded to this country a great boon, without any compact or stipulation. If the bill was suffered to pass, and his right honourable friend would afterwards bring on his motion, he, for one, would pledge himself to support it.

With respect to the question, whether the trade with India was best carried on by companies or individuals, he contended on historical documents, that in no instance was ever that trade conducted for any length of time in any country of Europe, unless by a monopoly. There was not a man in England or Ireland, who knew any thing of the trade, that was not convinced of the fact, and the opinion of every great author on the subject, from Colbert, who propounded an India company, down to Roluton, corroborated the idea, that the India trade must always belong to the greatest maritime power. One thing, he remarked with pleasure on the present occasion, that not a single merchant from any trading town in Ireland came forward with a petition against the bill; and he spoke this with the highest satisfaction, when he recalled the year 1785, when every town in Great Britain petitioned the English Parliament against the free trade of Ireland.

The Hon. Mr. STEWART said, he could not suffer the bill to go to a committee, without expressing his anxious hope, that every stage of its progress might be marked by an unanimous concurrence. He did not conceive any gentleman who attentively considered the principle of the measure could give it opposition; and he submitted to the House whether, if such an arrangement was to be adopted, much advantage might not result to the two countries, from the manner of carrying it into effect? If Ireland was to confer a favour on Great Britain, she should do it handsomely: to grant liberally was more dignified, than reluctantly to concede: besides, he was persuaded the happiest effects would result to the two countries, from a mutual spirit of accommodation being adopted, as the regulating principle of their conduct towards each other. He was led to deprecate opposition to the bill, from a thorough persuasion that it was founded upon the true principles, which should govern the proceedings of nations so circumstanced as they were in their conduct to each other. It was in vain to expect that countries engaged in trade should long remain politically connected; if they were engaged in commercial hostility. This consideration should determine both islands to seize every opportunity of rendering service to each other, when it could be done without any material surrender of their respective interests. That principle led him decidedly to approve of the present arrangement. It was a matter of great accommodation to the commerce of Great Britain, at the same time that the interests of Ireland are carefully attended to. To prove the magnitude of the favour conferred on England, it was only necessary to state that the China trade, to which Ireland is admitted to have an indisputable right, is the great channel of remittance, by which the India Company bring home the surplus of their territorial revenue. If Ireland was to

withdraw her consumption, particularly now that the possessions and revenues of the British empire in India, are materially increased by the late peace, it might exceedingly embarrass the affairs of the company, to whom Great Britain has thought fit to entrust the government of those extensive and valuable dominions. Ireland, as a branch of the empire, is interested in their protection; she should, therefore, cheerfully adopt such a system as is essential to their conservation and government. By her friendship to England, in the present instance, she will not injure herself. The interest of her consumers, of her manufacturers, and of her merchants is equally studied in the present arrangement. The consumers will have the Eastern produce fully as cheap as the people of England; the expence of re-export from London to Ireland is trifling, not greater than from London to the out-ports in Great Britain, and the duty in both countries is precisely the same. The manufacturers will have a large portion of the trade open to their produce; a ship of 800 tons burthen is annually to attend them at the port of Cork, to carry out their goods. They are enabled by this arrangement to export to any part of the East; whereas, if Ireland was to reject the system proposed, and to proceed to trade according to her abstract rights, China is the only port open to her ships; but to the Chinese market her productions are totally unsuited, whereas, in the British colonies, Irish sailcloth and many other articles will sell well, and in return raw materials be had, particularly silk for the future manufacture. Neither are the interests of the merchants forgot. The Southern whale fishery is open to them; the fur trade to Nootka-sound is open to them; they may trade between the North-west coasts of America and the coast of China, conforming to the same regulations as other British subjects; and if they incline to trade directly to the British colonies, or to China, they may do it either in the annual ship, or by purchasing stock in the company's funds.

The bill goes to place Ireland and England precisely on the same footing, in respect to the trade; it recognizes the India company as an imperial monopoly, having the same privileges from Ireland that it has from Great Britain, and upon the same terms, therefore, in fact, the only concession that Ireland makes, is, that she acquiesces in the principle of monopoly as applied to that branch of her commerce, and she does it for the best possible reason, because it suits the policy of Great Britain, and contributes to the effectual government of dominions, in the preservation and prosperity of which she has a common interest.

An idea had been thrown out, he said, that the favourable construction lately given to the navigation act, was meant as a sort of compromise for a surrender on the part of Ireland of the trade to China. He was convinced from what he knew of the dispositions of that country to this, that a more liberal motive influenced their conduct. Great Britain saw that she could do

an essential service to Ireland, without material prejudice to herself, and therefore gave it honourably without reservation or stipulation. But even had the act of navigation remained untouched, still he would have supported the present bill, persuaded, that as far as it went it was strictly fair between the two countries, and being convinced of that, he would have been as ready to give to Great Britain an example of affection and liberality, as to copy it from her. The importance of the navigation act, so construed to Ireland, had been admitted on all hands: however, it had been stated, as if it were to lessen the obligation, that it was no more than an act of justice to Ireland, a restitution of a right long withheld. This was an interpretation both unkind and untrue; from the moment Ireland declared herself independent of England, it was a matter of favour not of right that she could claim any intercourse with colonies, which were confessedly the property of Great Britain. However impolitic it might be for England to restrict in any degree the commerce of this country, nevertheless the terms under which Ireland was to be admitted to a participation of her colony trade. She certainly had the right as well as the power to decide in relinquishing this restriction; Great Britain has, however, done a great act of justice by herself. In giving re-export of colony produce from Ireland to Great Britain, she has opened new fields of wealth to this country; she has proceeded upon the true policy, that the strength of the body is proportionate to the vigour of its members, and she rests assured, that every encrease of wealth to Ireland, is so much additional strength acquired for the security of the empire.

He concluded, by repeating his hopes, that the House should pass the bill in such a manner, as to make the favour additionally acceptable to those on whom it was to be conferred, and that they would not lose an opportunity of offering to Great Britain this signal pledge of their regard and affection; which, in his opinion, they might do without in the least sacrificing the commercial interests of their own country.

DoctOR DUIGENAN said, he should not have risen to say a word in the debate, if gentlemen had not taken so much pains to magnify the importance of the concession this bill would make to England, and to alarm the people of this country, with an idea that the Parliament had alienated from them a most invaluable privilege.

In order to shew that nothing but the monopoly of a great nation could supply the India trade with advantage, he instanced the trade carried on thither for a century past by all the different nations of Europe, whose companies had been all ruined by it, insomuch that the whole amount of shipping that arrived to the

continent of Europe in the year 1791, was but four; one Danish, one French, one Dutch and one Portuguese.

With respect to the boasted fleet of fifteen ships from America, said to have been in the river Canton in 1785; what did this fleet consist of? Mere wherries, the whole tonnage of which altogether did not amount to the quantum of a single British Indiaman; a numerous fleet of which was then in the river of Canton.

This fleet of wherries brought home more tea than they could dispose of in their whole country, and their owners were obliged to re-export it to Europe, and sell it for a tenth less than it cost them in China. If therefore the trade to India was really such a mine of wealth as had been represented, why did not the sagacious Americans, the adventurous French, or any other of the nations of Europe, at least as wise as Ireland, find it out?

Mr. GRAYDON combated very successfully the assertion, that we could not export native manufactures in considerable quantities to the East, if the trade were thrown open. Nothing could, he said, induce him to consent to surrender a trade which might be thus valuable, but a belief that the interests of the empire required it. No consideration but that could persuade him to give up this great commercial, and he would add, constitutional right; for history afforded no instance of an independent country thus surrendering to another, her right to trade to the most wealthy part of the world, or indeed of granting a complete monopoly of any trade whatsoever. He shewed the absurdity of the argument drawn against the capability of this country to carry on a trade to the East, from her not having embarked in that trade during the ten years that the country has been independent. That circumstance he accounted for from the annual enactments of the Legislature, which prohibited the import of tea, the only return that could be had from that country, with which alone lucrative commerce could be hoped for by Ireland.

Mr. CORRY entered into a history of the commercial slights put by Great Britain upon this country, progressively, from the moment she began to fritter away our trade, in the reign of Charles the Second, until the beginning of the present reign, and he then pictured the progressive restoration of this country, from that time to this of her commercial rights; the great principal wanting, he said, was the construction of the navigation act, which not only put us in possession of that trade with the Western world, for which our geographical situation—our coasts and harbours so admirably fitted this country; but it would render Ireland the great depot, the magazine of Western produce for Great Britain, if not for all Europe; it was a measure attained for this country by the efforts of his right honourable

friend, who had thereby shewn himself the friend to the amity, the connexion, and the interests of both countries, and whose name would ever be remembered in both with gratitude and esteem.

The circumstances too of the time, at which this measure was ceded to this country, compared with that of 1775, when it was first asked and not obtained, rendered it now gracious in an extraordinary degree.

It was not now demanded by 40,000 volunteers in arms, to terrify a minister on the other side of the water; it was not fought through a six months money bill, to embarrass him into compliance; it was ceded now freely, liberally and unsolicited, and therefore called for a similar liberality on the part of this country.

The Hon. Mr. PERY was for supporting the India bill.

Mr. DUQUERY observed, that the right honourable member who brought in the bill, [Mr. Hobart] for regulating the trade of this kingdom to the East Indies, placed his measure upon its best and true foundation; the right honourable member has told you, that passing this bill into a law, will be of great and essential service to England; he is perfectly right in that position; it will secure to the British company the possession of a lucrative commerce, without the possibility of injury to her interests; it will shield her charter company in a quarter of the globe, where the interest of that company may be most easily assailed, and most deeply affected. The right honourable mover of the bill has conceded more, he has conceded that Ireland, in yielding up her free right of trading to the East Indies, surrenders a great commercial benefit to herself.

The right honourable member is perfectly right in his concession. Should you but leave the Eastern world open to the ships of Ireland, and the ports of Ireland open to all the produce of the East, you would soon behold your vessels traversing the Eastern seas, and returning into your harbours deeply and richly freighted. Underrate not the capacity of your country, and she will soon prove herself worthy of the situation in which the hand of Nature has placed her; Ireland, seated in the Atlantic ocean with deep and capacious harbours on every coast, presents to America her Western shore, while she opens her Eastern ports to the wealth of Europe: with improving manufactures and a growing spirit, you behold your country at the same moment offering to the overflowing capital of wealthy nations, a situation unrivalled for commerce.

Had man been but half as just to Ireland as nature had been bountiful, you would see her now one of the richest countries in the universe: but ill-fated and mistaken policy has kept this

country down for ages: the hand of power has pressed heavy on her; she has had the freedom of trade but for the short space of fourteen years; the year 1779 saw her emerged from commercial bondage, and what a gallant progress has she made? fourteen years only have elapsed since the fetters of our Irish commerce have been broken, and in that little period trade has advanced with uncommonly rapid movement.

When therefore we come to legislate for our trade—when we come to make laws to restrict our commerce, let us remember that we legislate on a subject where the benefits of a long experience have been unhappily denied to us; we are but slightly acquainted with the powers, the capacities, the natural advantages of our island, and with the spirit of enterprise that may one day animate our commerce. We are but a young nation in trade, and a young Parliament in commercial legislation, and therefore we ought to tread that ground with caution and reserve.

Mr. FORBES said, though he rose with a disposition to treat the opinions of others with all possible deference, yet on a measure which involved perhaps the surrender of our commerce with a great portion of the habitable globe, he felt it as a duty he owed to himself and his constituents to deliver his sentiments without reserve.—He must differ from gentlemen who said, that it was not necessary to consider the value and extent of the concession—as such would be an ungenerous procedure on our part; on the contrary, if, on examination, this concession proved to be so considerable as he conceived, he contended that the representatives were bound to obtain for the people a compensation from Great Britain, and should recollect that however laudable acts of generosity in individuals might appear, yet the members of that House, as trustees of the commercial interests of Ireland, were to be just, not generous. In order to induce the House to make this important concession, it had been stated that a continuance of the monopoly of the India Company would be in the highest degree beneficial to England; and this system of an exclusive trade was founded on sound and incontrovertible principles. The truth of these assertions he meant to combat by arguments not solely drawn from the writings of theoretical men, but from the experience of different countries, from the opinions of the merchants and present ministers of Great Britain, and from the reports on the subject by the Court of Directors of the India Company addressed to the English Administration, while the negotiation for the late renewal of their charter was depending. Every person, who heard him, was already in Smith's opinion of the impolicy and prejudice of an East India Company in a country so circumstanced as Great Britain; in which he is supported by all the enlightened writers of this age; the success and great extent to which the Portuguese for a century carried on a trade to the East Indies

without an exclusive charter, as well as the recent example of the Americans, completely refute the arguments of those who contend that a commercial intercourse with that quarter of the globe cannot be maintained with effect and advantage but through the medium of a monopoly. In a report on the subject of the India trade by a committee of the first national assembly, composed of some of the ablest men in France, the result of the experiment of an open trade and a company are so clearly stated as to decide any impartial mind in favour of the former system; it appears from that report that in a given space of time the company on an average annually employed 7 vessels, containing 4250 tons; while in a like space when the trade was free the merchants of France annually employed 29 vessels, containing 14,290; the value of the importations of the company within these periods amounted to 23 millions, while that of the free merchants rose to 33 millions; who exported 8000 pieces of Languedoc cloth, but the company in an equal number of years only 700 pieces. If the question was referred even to the merchants of Great Britain they would pronounce a sentence of condemnation against this monopoly, among the numerous resolutions of mercantile bodies in the sister kingdom to this effect he would select those of a most respectable meeting of merchants in Liverpool in November last; which state "that under the direction of the company the export trade to India was not conducted with proper attention, due means were not employed to explore new channels of traffic, and the infant manufactures of Great Britain were obstructed in their progress." The truth of these charges, he observed, was in a great measure confirmed even by the report of the committee of directors on the culture of sugar, in which it is stated, that this company of merchants have discouraged trade, inasmuch as they have drawn the manufactures from Bengal to the west of India, and so negligent have they been in extending their commerce, that it appears from the third number of their negociations with the ministers in March last, that in the year 1791, the shipping employed by the company in the trade between London and the British settlements amounted only to 7500 tons, while that of the ships fitted out by British subjects in the contraband trade to these settlements amounted to 10,255 tons. Mr. Dundas, in his letter to the company of the 16th of February, admits the fact of this illicit traffic to a considerable extent, and adds that as long as it continues, the public will not be satisfied that every thing has been done by the company that can be done. Would not, he asked, an individual merchant dismiss any agent as incapable of, or unfaithful to his trust, who suffered such an advantage to be gained over him in any island or colony, where he was armed with a monopoly of the commerce of the whole district, and supported with all the strength of the civil government; it is a fact, he said, that till apprehensions were entertained from the

merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, the defenders of the company never pretended that the exports or imports were conducted with a reference to commercial principles; and the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the friends of the company this day and at former periods, that they carried on a losing trade, affords the strongest proof of the uncommercial principles of their system; it remained therefore for the company and their advocates to explain the cause that the trade with Asia, the most wealthy, populous and extensive quarter of the globe, is the only one of all the branches of commerce, in which the people of England are engaged, which has baffled their spirit of enterprise and adventure, and proved unprofitable.—He said, that from all the information he could procure a doubt was not entertained in his mind that if the monopoly was dissolved, the trade to India would encrease in a two-fold proportion; in confirmation and support of the evidence he had already adduced of the inexpediency of continuing the exclusive charter of the company, he should state the opinion on that subject of Mr. Dundas, who, as minister for India, must be more competent perhaps than any member of either Parliament to form an accurate judgment on this question. Mr. Dundas, in a letter to the Court of Directors of the 24th of March last acknowledges, “that he was not anxious what the decision of the court of proprietors may be, being of opinion that the grant of an exclusive commerce to India, is not very material to the interests either of the company or the public.”

He trusted he had proved by the authority of the most eminent theoretical writers, by early as well as recent experience, by the opinion of the merchants of England, by the admissions of the company themselves, as well of the minister for India affairs, that the continuance of the company's exclusive charter is not in the highest degree beneficial to Great Britain.—He next called the attention of the House to the argument urged by the gentlemen on the opposite side, that the discussion, whether the continuance of the company was advantageous or not to Great Britain was unnecessary on the part of Ireland, as it was impossible for the people of this country to engage in one branch of the India trade, that to China, from the circumstance of its being carried on by bullion, (a species of adventure which must prove extremely detrimental to Ireland in the present state of its capital) and respecting the trade to the British settlements in Asia, Ireland was to be admitted to a participation in it through the medium of the company, the only means by which a participation could become beneficial to this kingdom.

Respecting the assertion of the disadvantages of carrying on the trade to India by bullion, it was not justified by experience, nor founded on any true principle of commerce. The trade of India at all periods has been attended with considerable profits; and yet bullion has been the medium by which it has been con-

ducted (as Robertson states) by the ancients;—and (as the ninth report of the select committee of the English House of Commons proves) by Europeans since the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope.—The objection does not apply stronger to the India, than any other circuitous trade; and that has a peculiar advantage over all trades of this description, as though the returns may be slow the profits are great; if Ireland sends manufactures to Spain to barter for bullion, which she again barter for tea in China; this transaction is clearly an interchange of goods for goods, through the intervention of silver; which instead of injuring the capital of the country must encrease it; while the necessity of resorting annually to Spain for bullion might be productive of the most beneficial consequences to the commerce of this kingdom; by removing those impediments to the vent of Irish linens, which at present exist in that country. He said, that gentlemen, who insisted so pertinaciously on the disadvantages of this trade to China appear ignorant of a very important fact, that bullion itself is an article of commerce: from the statements of Mr. Anderson, accountant to the board of controul, it appears that the profit of the India Company on the silver exported to China, from 1786 to 1793, amounted to about 12*l.* per cent.—He next proceeded to state, that by accounts laid before the English House of Commons, of the prime cost of teas in China, and the amount of the sums for which they were sold at the India-house for one year ending the 1st of March, 1790—estimating the consumption of Ireland at two millions of pounds, and deducting the prime cost of this quantity, as a calculation, according to these accounts at twenty pence per pound on an average, and also for insurance four pound per cent.—for freight 14*l.* per ton, allowing interest on the capital employed to purchase the tea at 5*l.* per cent. for fourteen months, and for the charges in China 6*l.* per ton, it appeared that a profit of near 30*l.* per cent. on his capital would remain to the importer of tea, without including the advantage of 12*l.* per cent. on the bullion he exported. In support of this calculation, he observed, that he had allowed fourteen months for the voyage to and from China, though the committee of the directors had admitted in their report, respecting the participation of Ireland, it could be performed in twelve months. Relative to the charge of freight he also had been liberal; as offers had been made in London by individuals at the rate of 10*l.* per ton, and many at 12*l.* In respect to the arguments relied on by the friends of the company, that ships of an inferior size and value, applicable to other trades, are not proper for such long voyages, he said, it was refuted by every experienced navigator of these days, and by some facts which he considered as conclusive, large vessels labour under great disadvantages as to celerity and dispatch, they are worse sea-boats than small vessels; the vessels with which the

Americans navigate the Indian seas, are found perfectly adapted to the trade, though very inferior in tonnage to an English Indianman. Captain Cooke, and the other eminent circumnavigators, preferred ships of a moderate size as best suited for the variety of seas through which they were to sail; and he adduced as proof, that by vessels of that description the voyage is performed not only with more expedition, but also with more safety.—The circumstance of the difference of the rate of insurance to India of a ship of 400 or 500 tons, and one of eight or nine hundred, which was one per cent. in favour of the former description: and to the assertion that ships of a peculiar make and size only are fit for the conveyance of tea the fact of that commodity being brought home in considerable quantities from Canton, on account of the company, by the vessels employed to transport the convicts to Botany-bay, is a full and complete answer.

The considerable disproportion between the profits of a private trader and the company on the importation of tea, he contended was to be imputed to the enormous sums paid by the company for freight, demurrage and other charges; the supply of shipping was converted by those monopolists into an instrument of patronage; and such was the growth of abuse in this instance that it appears by the printed minutes that while the committee of directors were paying from 20*l.* to 23*l.* per ton on account of freight, they rejected offers for providing ships at the reduced freight of 17*l.* per ton. He said, admitting for the sake of argument, that a trade with China by means of bullion was unprofitable, it did not follow from thence, that Ireland was incapable of deriving considerable advantage from a commercial intercourse with that country; for by the second report of the committee of directors, it appeared that the export of bullion had decreased in seven years ending in 1791, 300,000*l.* That none would have been exported this year but for the exigencies of the war in India, to which the export of last year had been applied; and the directors expect that the whole will soon be purchased with a very trifling export of silver, owing to the steady gradation with which the export of the British manufactures to China is advancing: in another part of the same report they state as a fact, that the exports of the company to China are greatly increased; nor is this (they add) the result of compulsion towards the Chinese; on the contrary, they seek these articles with an avidity, which every year produces an increased demand, inasmuch that since the year 1784, not a single piece of woollen has remained on hands in the ware-house of the company at Canton; one species of woollen exported to China, according to this report, in 1785, amounted to 4500 pieces; in 1791, to 6450; long ells, another species, increased within the like periods from 60,000 pieces to 150,000 pieces. Camblets in the same time from 332, to 2340 pieces. And it is stated in a memorial of

the city of Exeter to the minister, in the month of March last, that in a few years the value of the annual export of long ells from that city to China had encreased from 60,000*l.* to 400,000*l.* and this export it was expected would soon be double that amount. But it has been stated by a right honourable baronet [the Chancellor of the Exchequer] that the company lost by these exports of woollen. He said, their generosity was without precedent;—to export perhaps half a million of woollens to their own prejudice, to serve the good people of England; if their trade encreases in proportion to the expectation of Exeter, they must be ruined; and by having a command of the best market in the world, their liberality he really considered as a stronger argument for the continuance of the monopoly than any which had been advanced;—it covered, in his eyes, a multitude of their sins; but he made no doubt it would be discovered on a minute examination that the India Company were not so thoughtless and prodigal; and indeed Mr. Dundas, in his speech, does not seem to give implicit credit to this assertion of their negative industry, though experience had proved them fully competent to produce any false operation in commerce or finance.—Of this he was certain, that if the export was a losing speculation, it could only be explained by the absurd and extravagant charges with which the company had loaded their trade. He said, it was notorious that Ireland was capable of engaging in a manufacture of woollens similar to those made at Exeter for the market of China; the process of the manufacture was simple, and those who made camblets or serges, could weave that species of new drapery styled long ells.—By the statement in the report of the directors it appeared, that camblets were in considerable demand at Canton; of this manufacture the Irish were already in possession; to bring it to perfection nothing was wanting but foreign demand. Those prospects therefore of a considerable export of woollens to China, he contended, were solid and well founded; of late years the manufacture of new drapery had been extended to many parts of Ireland;—in one county 1500 looms were employed in that line, as was proved before a committee of the House in the last month.

An observation of Smith's respecting Denmark and Sweden has been quoted—"That it was better for such poor countries to buy East India goods of other countries even dearer than they could be imported, than to engage in a branch of commerce, in which the capital can maintain so small a quantity of productive labour at home."—This argument, he said, was not applicable to Ireland, where tea to such a considerable amount is consumed as a necessary of life, and not imported as by Sweden on the precarious prospect of a vent through a contraband trade with England;—and according to the accounts in the reports of the directors, of the rapid and extensive sale of woollens in China, it cannot be objected that a capital employed by the Irish in such a

trade would maintain but a small quantity of productive labour at home.

From the example of Sweden he drew an inference directly contrary to that of some other gentlemen, and argued that it should prove an incitement, instead of a discouragement, to engage in the East India trade.—In the second report of the committee of directors it is stated—"That the Swedish company, by far the most prosperous and best regulated in Europe, sent out silver to a large amount, and for the deficiency their capitals could not supply, they received money in China against the drafts of their super-cargoes on the company in Europe; they exported little, if any manufactures, though they could have purchased them in England, and have them delivered at Gottenburgh at 3 per cent. on the first cost; the progress was so rapid of this company that had not the commutation act intervened, it must have swallowed up most of the trade of China, and reduced that part of the British company to a small portion." Page 28. If the Swedish company under all the accumulated disadvantages of a system of monopoly—of the want of a market at home for tea—of a precarious sale abroad—of an incapacity of exporting of manufactures carried on a trade so profitable and extensive as nearly to have extinguished such a powerful rival as the British company; how valuable and lucrative must such a branch of commerce prove to the Irish, who do not labour under any of those disadvantages!

Respecting the argument, that it was more beneficial for Ireland to purchase teas from the India Company in England, where our manufactures could be exchanged for that article, than to import it directly from the place of its growth, he observed, that it might have some weight, if the British company took from Ireland manufactures to the amount of 300,000*l.* the sum paid to them for tea; but it implied what was not founded in fact, that the Irish, by their exertions to open a direct intercourse with China, endeavoured to divert their capital into a new channel, or volunteer in a new trade; whereas the truth of the case was directly the reverse. At present they were compelled to pay a large sum for tea, which was become in a great measure a necessary of life:—the only question now to be decided was, whether, under these circumstances, it was not advisable that Ireland should purchase it at the cheapest rate, and conduct that purchase in such a manner as may prove most advantageous to this country, by maintaining in it a great quantity of productive labour? an object which cannot be attained by the present practice of dealing with the British company.

He stated, among the numerous benefits which Ireland might derive from a free trade to Asia, the attraction to this kingdom of British capitals now employed in foreign vessels to a considerable amount. The English would certainly prefer the people of this country to foreigners; and consider their capitals more secure in

the hands of men, who were governed by laws similar to their own, than in those of the subjects of any arbitrary monarch. In the present situation of Ireland it is indispensably necessary that every source of commerce should be explored; he observed, it was with the utmost difficulty, that any of the Irish manufactures could gain admission into foreign markets; for connected as this kingdom is with Great Britain, the Irish are incapable of holding out inducements to other countries to engage in a commercial intercourse with this; they cannot form distinct commercial treaties, for any privileges they may obtain in any foreign port they cannot grant any return, they cannot reciprocate, nor can they expect a more free admission of their manufactures into foreign countries, while the sister kingdom prohibits the entry of any of them, except plain linens. Under a combination of such powerful impediments in all the markets of Europe, a free trade with China becomes an object of the first importance to Ireland, which is now, according to the report of the directors, the only market in the world where the manufacturers of England and Ireland must not meet with competitors; where the population and wealth of the inhabitants may create an extent of demand for our manufactures beyond all calculation, while the reduced price, at which tea, if directly imported, could be purchased, by increasing the consumption of that article in this kingdom, must facilitate and enlarge the sale of our manufactures at Canton.

He, in addition to the other arguments proving the necessity of exploring new sources of commerce, urged the rapid progress with which America advanced in manufactures; a circumstance which must diminish her demand for ours. Additional encouragement, he said, must be held out to excite the industry of the people in a country where two millions of the inhabitants have been declared by Parliament unable to pay a tax of two shillings per house, and more than one million is remitted annually to absentees, to be expended on the manufactures and products of another country.

He next adverted to the participation in the trade to the British colonies in India granted by the bill. He was not justified by the directors or our ministers to expect that this country would derive advantage from such a grant; in the former debates on this subject, the gentlemen on the opposite bench, had asserted that this was a losing trade, carried on by the company solely for the purpose of remitting their revenues to England as the committee of directors in their first report labour to establish that fact; they state the principal exports of British products to consist of copper, naval stores and woollens; it appears, by their accounts, that the first article always is in an equal, sometimes in a double proportion in point of value to the aggregate amount of the other two; but Ireland is in effect restrained from the export of this as well as naval stores. Relative to woollens the first report states, that "Advices from India present a tiresome narrative of the circum-

stances which prevent the sale of British manufactures ;” and that the loss on woollens for six years ending 1790, amounted to 37,790*l.* also that “ It appears by letters from India, that larger quantities of woollens have remained four years unsold in the company’s warehouses in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. They conclude with this observation, “ though the causes differ, which prevent the sale of British manufactures—it is much to be feared they are permanent, and that there is little probability of encreasing the consumption of woollens in India.” If the trade was free, he did not doubt that it might be productive of profit ; and that the losses sustained were to be imputed to the uncommercial principles adopted by the company. He was inclined to believe, from the statement of this fact in a tract, (written with much information and ability, by Mr. Law, who was a member of the council of revenue at Bengal) “ that similar articles dispatched from Calcutta in Ostend ships, sold advantageously in foreign markets, which had proved a losing cargo to the merchants who had sent them in the company’s ships.”

By this bill Ireland is given a participation in the losing, but not beneficial trade, if that system deserves the name of trade which allows of an export but not import in return ; for respecting the import, Ireland will continue after the passing of this act in its present situation ;—and equally objectionable is the clause which gives subject to a contingency (which may never happen) an export trade to China without an import of an article in return ; attended with so much profit, and such a certain and extensive sale as tea. To prove the inefficacy of the participation to which Great Britain and Ireland was to be admitted under the India bill, he read part of a memorial from the merchants of Glasgow to the minister in March last, printed by the authority of the directors ;—in the third number of their negotiations, which was to the following effect :

“ That a trade so shackled by means of ships, factors, warehouses, &c. at home and abroad belonging to the company, whose interests may not always perhaps be in consonance with those of private adventurers, would be a source of eternal heart-burning and complaint, we are under a full conviction that the plan proposed of private traders exporting in the company’s ships would be entirely nugatory.”

He next applied himself to an argument on which gentlemen on the opposite bench had much relied, that though the provisions in the bill might not be as beneficial as the friends of this country wished, yet the people of Ireland on the subject of the trade to India were placed precisely in the same situation as their fellow subjects in Great Britain ; this he denied : the case with regard to England was to be resolved into this question, whether she was to carry on a trade to Asia through the medium of a company or individuals ? but Ireland was reduced to a different

alternative—a free trade, or no trade to Asia; for the participation affected to be granted to this country by the bill he considered as a nullity; he contended, that the condition of the two kingdoms under the operation of the bill could never be considered as equal while Great Britain enjoyed all the benefits accruing from the residence of the monopoly; these he enumerated, such as an export annually by the company of one million of British products and manufactures; the building, outfit and repair of eighty thousand tons of shipping, one million annually paid to English ship-owners for freight, demurrage, &c. &c.—Customs paid by the company annually amounting to six hundred thousand pounds paid by the company into the Exchequer in alleviation of the burthens of the people; twelve thousand seamen annually employed in the company's ships.—The advantage of the re-export of a considerable portion of the commodities of India. He now insisted that he had fully established this fact that, if the bill then before the House was passed into a law, it must operate as a surrender on the part of Ireland of a trade to India, in which she was capable of engaging with considerable advantage. Yet to this surrender he was prepared to consent, but on principles very different from those stated by the ostensible minister in this House; principles on which he believed the people of Great Britain acted when they acquiesced under this measure. When he recollected the violent efforts made by the company in 1783, against even an attempt to reform the gross abuses which prevailed in the administration of their affairs, that in these efforts they were seconded by the whole army of monopolists, by all the trading and monied companies in the kingdom; that should any endeavours be used to dissolve this monopoly, in addition to the former support the India Company would experience, the powerful aid of the West India planters, apprehensive of the injurious consequences to them of a free import of sugars from the East, he said, he did not hesitate to declare that a real friend to the British empire ought not to expose the present disordered system of credit and trade in Great Britain to the hazard of such a convulsion as so formidable a combination of interests might produce; but it was at the same time incumbent on the sincere friends of Ireland to insist on some consideration being granted to the country for this important sacrifice; some compensation for the Irish, who could not console themselves as the English by the circumstances of alleviation, attending the unavoidable circulation of the capital of the company through the merchants and manufactures of the island; who provide the cargoes of their outward-bound ships.

He should be answered, he presumed, by the right honourable Secretary [Mr. Hobart], that Ireland had already received compensation by the explanation of the navigation act;—a measure, which he had effected, but which he and the gentlemen with

whom he acted, had never agitated. In the first place, he said, that assertion was not well founded; as in 1787, his right honourable friend [Mr. Grattan] had made a motion for that purpose, which he had supported with his vote and voice, and the right honourable Secretary opposed with both. And next he contended, that this measure was not to be considered as a compensation for the present surrender, Ireland having long since purchased this explanation for a valuable consideration; for her Parliament had granted in 1785, 140,000*l.* new taxes, which was esteemed and intended as a full price for this advantage; she has also given other considerations for it—she had maintained three thousand men since 1763, for the defence of the West India islands, in the trade of which till this year she had been denied a full participation; she had also, as a further price, stipulated to impose on raw sugars imported from the West Indies into this kingdom, an enormous duty equal to the English. A poor country had consented to pay a tax on an article, become in a great degree a necessary of life, equal to that paid by one of the richest countries in Europe; and in addition to all these concessions and considerations, the Parliament of Ireland, at the instance of the English minister, adopted all the penalties of the English navigation act, while it abstained from any stipulation for the advantages that act confers; and Ireland thereby restrained herself from resorting to America, or the ports of the Baltic, for the purchase of ships, though she could have procured them there on much cheaper terms, a great object to this country, which must continue incapable of engaging in ship-building to a considerable extent, if her commerce is to be limited in the manner proposed by this bill.

In respect to the argument, that it could not be deemed an act of injustice on the part of England to withhold from Ireland an equal explanation of the navigation act, as she had rendered her Parliament independent of that of Great Britain, he said, the conduct of the sister kingdom relative to America, was the best answer which could be given to it; though America had withdrawn herself not only from all subjection to the British Parliament, but also from all allegiance to the British Crown, yet, after this event, that parliament passed an act to permit the re-export from America for England of the produce of the British West India islands, and also from the West Indies to England of the tobacco of Virginia.

He asked, was it not unjust to deny to the Irish, who have not only adhered to the Crown of Great Britain, but have always, and are now expending their treasure and shedding their blood in her defence, those privileges, which she has freely, and without an equivalent, granted to the Americans alienated and separated from Great Britain?

He having proved, as he conceived, that this explanatory act, passed lately in England, could not be considered as a compensation for such an important surrender, said, that according to his opinion, the only compensation it was practicable for Great Britain to grant at this period, had, in some measure, been suggested by the principal members of the Irish Administration on the introduction of the bill now depending for confirming the India Company's charter, when they stated, that the bill tended to establish principles of perfect commercial equality between the two kingdoms. This equality, he said, should pervade the whole system; it should confer privileges, as well as impose restrictions. But if the India bill passed without the motion of his right honourable friend [Mr. Grattan] being adopted, the principle would only obtain in Ireland in the latter instance; for the manufacturers of Great Britain would be admitted into the Irish market, at a low duty, while those of this kingdom would be excluded from the British ports, either by absolute prohibitions, or duties so enormous as to produce an effect equal to prohibitions.

If we viewed the comparative statement of the duties to which the manufacturers of each kingdom were subject on entry into the other, the detail of those payments in Ireland will be found to be a list of indulgences, while the table of those levied in England, is nothing but a catalogue of proscriptions. The experience of the French treaty having proved, that the apprehensions the English manufacturers entertained in the year 1785, from the free admission of the Irish manufacturers into their market, were totally void of foundation, he was justified in asserting, that every principle of commercial policy, as well as every argument formed on the expediency of cultivating a common interest between the two countries, operated in support of the right honourable member's motion.

After having objected to the clause of limitation of twenty years to the existence of the company's charter, as not being sufficiently explicit in the Irish bill, he concluded with declaring, that he should vote for Mr. Grattan's motion.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGBAM spoke against the motion of Mr. Grattan, on very nearly the same grounds as the gentleman who had preceded him on that side of the question. He granted, however, that it was now become necessary, that this country should endeavour to explore new sources of commerce, and was long in recommending it to her to turn her attention to the Levant trade which was now principally engrossed by that great woman the Empress of Russia.

Sir WILLIAM GLEADOWE spoke in favour of the bill; he declared he had had the opinion of some men of the first commercial

information, who thought that it would be productive of very great benefits to this country, and who would themselves engage in the trade immediately if the bill should pass.

Mr. VANDELEUR inferred from the promptitude of those gentlemen whom Sir William Gleadowe had mentioned to engage in the trade even limited as it is, that it must be a trade peculiarly fitted for this country. He spoke for a considerable time in favour of Mr. Grattan's resolution.

Mr. HOBART now rose, and apologised for troubling the House with a word at so late an hour; which he should not do, did he not see it necessary to remind gentlemen, that when he had first introduced this bill, he had stated plainly the principle on which he wished it to stand; an appeal to the discretion and liberality of Parliament, without any compact or stipulation whatever. Nothing he had hitherto heard from one side of the House, or from the other, had been sufficient to induce him to alter that footing. He had candidly acknowledged, in the first instance, that the bill would be granting a great favour to England; he did not wish to depreciate it in the least degree; but if gentlemen on the other side had been at so much pains to magnify that favour, gentlemen on his side were justified in expressing their feelings on the subject.

He had, he said, been assiduous in obtaining from the British Parliament a similar concession towards this country; that concession was yielded liberally and without stipulation; and if it was productive of national advantages to Ireland, he should account it the happiest circumstance of his life.

His principal objection throughout this was, that it should have any appearance of bargain; and his wish was, that every thing should be conducted with liberality. With respect to the effects of the navigation act, he would not pretend to say, with certainty, it would secure to this country the markets of Great Britain; it would, however, secure her own for at least one-half the quantity of West India produce she consumed, and which she now imports from England.

A right honourable friend of his [Mr. William Burton Conyngham] had talked of the necessity of seeking new fields of commerce; here then was a new and immediate field.

He did not wish to go into the question of the India business at large; every thing which could be said on the subject, and of which he had been at some pains to inform himself, had been already said; one objection, however, he felt it necessary to make on an assertion, that the export from this country of woollens would be a loss. The trade, he admitted, had been a losing one, at ten pound per ton freightage; but the India Company

came now to offer it at five pounds; this surely would not be a losing trade.

Mr. GRATTAN assented to withdraw his motion, on condition of bringing it again forward in the course of the session.

Mr. CONOLLY and Doctor BROWNE expressed their assent; and the order of the day being read, the House went into committee *pro forma* on the India trade bill; reported progress, and obtained leave to sit again.

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1793.

Reported the resolution of the whole House for an address to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that he would lay before his Majesty the humble desire of this House, that he would be pleased to order the sum of 4000*l.* for the purpose of completing the buildings of the New House of Industry; and that this House will make good the same.

FRIDAY, JULY 5, 1793.

The inland fishery bill, Maryborough road bill, and the libel bill, were all read a third time, and passed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved for leave to bring in a bill, for giving relief to Protestant Dissenters, with respect to the test; which was granted.

On the order of the day for going into committee on the agriculture bill,

Doctor DUIGNAN opposed the Speaker's leaving the chair, on the ground that the bill by enabling tenants for life to lease away their lands for ever in certain cases, would injure the property of remainder-men.

The Hon. FRANCIS HUTCHINSON defended the bill.

The House resolved into committee, went through the bill and the report ordered for to-morrow.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved for leave to bring in a bill, for vesting in the Crown the estates forfeited in 1688.

He stated that great inconvenience had arisen from there not being a power within this kingdom to lease these lands; the disposal

of them now being in the King, under the direction of the British Parliament, by the adopting act of Mr. Yelverton. This had been considered by Mr. Hobart, who in the last session of the British Parliament introduced a bill for vesting these lands in the King, to be disposed of by him with the consent of the Parliament of this country. This attention to the interests and independence of Ireland, on the part of the minister and of Great Britain, he very warmly extolled.—Leave given.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD presented some petitions from persons in the city of Waterford, stating the inconveniencies they suffered from being kept out of the corporation of that city, having legal title to be admitted; and praying that the corporation bill, now before the House, might pass into a law.

Mr. GRATTAN presented a similar petition from a number of persons similarly aggrieved in this city. Petitions received, and referred to the committee of the whole House on the bill, which then sat; and after some opposition from Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, the Hon. Mr. WESLEY, and Mr. RUXTON; who were answered by the PRIME SERJEANT, the ATTORNEY GENERAL, Mr. BERESFORD and Mr. HOLMES; went through the bill with some amendment. Report ordered for to-morrow.

Mr. FORBES moved the postponing of his pension and responsibility bills until to-morrow, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer was to make his statement relative to the measures he intended to introduce on those subjects.

Mr. M'CARTNEY presented a bill for securing to Mr. Camac for twenty-one years, the exclusive manufacture of vitriol in a certain mode discovered by him. Read the first time, and, at the instance of Mr. CORRY, ordered to be printed. The second reading was ordered for Monday next.

Mr. CORRY stipulated that sufficient time should be given in the subsequent stages of the bill, for persons who might think themselves affected by the bill, to make application against it.

SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1793.

Read a third time, and passed, the bill for constituting a new parish in the city of Dublin, to be called the Parish of St. George, and for erecting a parish church therein; also the bill for the trial in this kingdom of treasons committed out of his Majesty's dominions.

Mr. FORBES observed that the pension and responsibility bills, were ordered for committal this day. If the House had no objection, he was now ready to proceed in them.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER rose and declared his intention of bringing in his appropriation bill (in which a limitation of the pension list is included) in a few days. He only waited for a vote of 256,000*l.* from the committee of supply, as a foundation for the bill. He would move that this committee should sit on Tuesday next, and the following day; if the committee should agree on the vote, he would introduce his bill. In the mean time he would leave a scheme of the new arrangement of the civil expences in the vote office, where gentlemen might consult it at pleasure, and come prepared for the discussion of it at some subsequent stage of the bill. He then moved that the committee of supply do sit on Tuesday next; which, after a word or two from Mr. FORBES, agreeing to postpone his bill until that of the right honourable baronet's was introduced, was ordered.

Mr. FORBES said, that what had fallen from the right honourable baronet was a reason, perhaps, for postponing the pension bill; but he had heard none to induce him to postpone his other measure, the responsibility bill. If gentlemen had any such reasons to offer, he would be glad to hear them.

Mr. HOBART said, he was always unwilling to pledge the Government to any specific measure, lest, from some unforeseen circumstances, he should incur the charge of breaking faith. He would venture to say, however, on the present occasion, that the powers which it was in contemplation to give to the new responsible treasury board, were likely to be such as would satisfy the honourable gentleman.

Mr. FORBES said, that on this intimation, and as the belief that the right honourable member would not preside over any government, that would not faithfully carry into execution a principle they asserted to adopt, he would consent to the postponement of this measure also.

Read a third time the charitable loan bill; and on the question being put, that the bill do pass,

Mr. JOHNSON opposed the passing of the bill; he stated it to be a bill calculated for the advantage of an individual, and injurious to the public. He therefore moved that the bill be rejected.

Mr. GRAYDON went at some length into a detail of the bill, which he contended would be exceedingly useful to the lower classes of the community.

On the question being put, the bill was rejected. On a division there being,

For the rejection	-	-	-	26
Against it	-	-	-	16
Majority for the rejection				10

The ATTORNEY GENERAL presented a bill for revesting in his Majesty the estates forfeited in 1688, yet remaining unfold; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time on Monday next.

Mr. GRAYDON moved, that the committee on the revenue bill, be empowered to receive a clause for applying the duties on imported cotton thread, for the encouragement of hosiery, by paying bounties on cotton thread made in this kingdom for hosiery use. The motion was negatived.

MONDAY, JULY 8, 1793.

Mr. CORRY presented a petition from John Davis, James Christie, &c. on behalf of themselves and others, against the bill for granting to Col. Camac a monopoly of vitriol, made after a certain manner by him invented.

Mr. M'CARTNEY also presented a petition from a great number of persons concerned in the linen manufacture, praying that the bill might pass.

The order of the day for reading this bill a second time being read,

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD opposed the principle of the bill: he said that the mode of making vitriol which was specified by the bill, and on which the monopoly was to be granted, was so far from being a new invention, that it was retailed in a very common printed book. If gentlemen would take the trouble of turning to the fourth volume of the Encyclopedia Britannica, page 456 and 457, they would there find two modes of making vitriol, stated with great minuteness; the one from pyrites and the other from sulphurous ores; which latter was the mode said to be invented by Mr. Camac, and specified in the bill.

He objected also to the wording of the act. It enacted that none should use any part of the invention of Mr. Camac, nor even imitate his invention; this would go to prevent any vitriol from being made in any way whatsoever.

He shewed that the English acts of Parliament, which grant a monopoly always, contain a minute specification of the discovery, whereas the present bill was so cautious on that head, as not to give the least intimation of the manner in which vitriol is to be made in the new manner.

Mr. Camac had stated, that by this new invention he was enabled to make a vitriol twenty-five per cent. cheaper than in the ordinary way; Mr. Beresford thought this a sufficient *bonus* without also granting a monopoly for twenty-five years.

He observed, that there is a very wide difference between the invention of a machine which is capable of exact imitation, and an invention in chemistry, where the process may remain a secret with the inventors for ever, as it is not at all palpable or obvious to the understanding. In the one case the invention is sold when the machine is shewn, in the other not so; hence he inferred, that with respect to the former, a patent is necessary to secure to the inventor the benefits of his discovery; in the latter he may completely secure these benefits without either patent or bill.

Mr. M'CARTNEY said, that if the discovery was not really a new one, the bill would give no advance to Mr. Camac, as it contained a clause which rendered it inoperative, if the mode by Mr. Camac was not really a discovery of his. He dwelt largely on the necessity of adopting every measure which was likely to benefit manufactures, which as yet were in their infancy here; the bill, he thought, proposed such a measure as would procure for the country a principal material for its staple manufacture, twenty-five per cent. cheaper than it can be purchased at present. The bill was the more necessary as there existed no power in the Crown, in this country, to grant patents as in England.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL denied the position, that the Crown is not enabled by its prerogative to secure to an inventor the benefits of his discovery. The power certainly existed in the Crown here as well as in England, but was restrained from abuse. The common case was, that the Crown might grant a monopoly in such cases for a reasonable time: this reasonable time was limited by statute to fourteen years, and he thought it would not be wise to depart from that principle in the present case, and grant a monopoly of twenty-five years.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL was against the bill.

Mr. CORRY said, the more he considered this bill, the more he was convinced it ought not to pass. It was stated, that Mr. Camac could now undersell the other manufacturers of vitriol twenty-five per cent. and that he procured his materials in Ireland. Of the secret which enabled him to manufacture thus cheap, he would, by the bill, have a complete monopoly; he might be said to have also a monopoly of the materials. If then the House would agree to vesting this monopoly in him, the vitriol manufacture must fall exclusively into his hands, in consequence of his being enabled to undersell all the other vitriol companies of the kingdom. Were the House prepared to agree to this, and would Mr. Camac, if thus in complete possession of the monopoly of vitriol, be content with his twenty-five per cent.?

The petition in support of the bill was certainly that of men highly respectable, but it was founded only on report, and evidently was framed without a due consideration of the subject, because it was clear that the linen manufacturers could by no means wish that Mr. Camac should be vested with a full monopoly of this article, a consequence which must follow from the bill.

The question for the second reading on the first of September next passed in the affirmative without a division. The bill of course was lost.

The report of the bill for better collecting money in the county of Dublin being brought up,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he would oppose, to the utmost of his powers, those amendments in the bill, which went to increase the salaries of certain officers employed in the collection. Those salaries had once already been increased, since the men who now held those places came first into office. If thus increased they were now thought by those people unequal to their situation, let them resign, and others would be very ready to succeed them.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE also spoke against the amendments.

Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD and Counsellor ORMSBY in support of them.

A difference of opinion thus existing which would induce a division; and there not being forty members present, the consideration of the report was postponed until to-morrow.

TUESDAY, JULY 9, 1793.

Doct^r DUIGENAN observed, that such a great number of petitions had been presented by persons, praying to be included in the present insolvent bill, as might ultimately occasion the bill being lost, which would be very distressing to a great number of poor individuals; and, as a friend to the bill, he moved, that it be an instruction to the committee on the insolvent bill, to receive a clause, that no persons who had petitioned the House to be included in the insolvent bill, except those whose petitions were referred to committees, and specially reported upon, should be included in the present bill; which was agreed to.

Went into further committee on the insolvent bill; Mr. JOHN O'NEILL in the chair.

Mr. WESLEY moved a clause, that Andrew Armstrong, an attorney, be exempted from the benefit of the bill; and also several other persons were by name, who are at present in confinement, excluded from the benefit of the act.

On the House being resumed, it adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 1793.

The forfeited estate bill was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. DAY presented the temporary statute bill; which was read the first time.

On the order of the day for going into committee on the commercial credit bill,

Mr. GRATTAN wished to submit it to the consideration of the House before this bill passed, whether something ought not to be done for the relief of manufactures, by encouraging the export of them, and whether the present bill were not a proper one, in which to introduce a clause for that purpose. He was unwilling to make any specific motion on this subject, lest he should put the House under a necessity of opposing it, and of thus apparently refusing relief to the present distress. He wished, however, that gentlemen would consider whether it might not be right to appoint a committee of the whole House, for the purpose of determining whether or not any relief could be granted.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER observed, that the bill now before the House was designed, not to restore men to

employment, but to prevent more from being dismissed by preventing bankruptcies. If the House should engage in commercial speculations to promote manufactures, the whole revenue of the country would be found inadequate to the undertaking. Trade, he thought, was not to be recalled by acts of Parliament; he therefore moved the order of the day.

The House then resolved into committee on the bill; when Mr. GRATTAN again urged his idea, and suggested that it might be useful to introduce a clause, appropriating a sum of 30,000*l.* to be applied in bounty on the export of goods.

Mr. JOHN BERRSFORD asked, where those goods could be exported to on bounty? The House could not grant a bounty on the export to Great Britain or any of her settlements; and he knew no other place at this time to which they could be sent.

The SPEAKER was also adverse to the idea. He said, that the distress principally existed in the cotton manufactures. Such had been the demand for that kind of goods some time back, that the manufacturers of both Great Britain and Ireland had speculated too widely in it: they had now glutted completely every market in the world, inasmuch, that at present no bounty, however great, could procure a vent for that manufacture.]

The linen manufacture too had suffered. In the last market there had been more linen for sale and less sold than at any former period. But whence did this arise? From the want of commercial credit arising from the improper conduct of the English banks. This bill went to re-establish that credit, and probably before the end of the year would effect its purpose; and then, without the interference of Parliament, the linen trade would again revive. The best mode, in his opinion, to remedy the present distress was, to restore the circulation of cash; but if on every temporary stop arising from the fear perhaps of insurrection, or from misconception of the state of the country, Parliament should interfere, instead of doing good, he was apprehensive they would do mischief. He wished the bill should pass in its present state, without any clog whatsoever.

Mr. GRATTAN said, it was not easy to answer the question of the right honourable gentleman who spoke last but one, when he asked where manufactures could be sent; but the manufacturers, in their petitions, had mentioned America as a probable market, if an export bounty were granted. Some years since a similar bounty had been given, and it in some measure produced its effect. His idea however was, not immediately to propose such a measure, but that a committee of the whole House should take the subject into consideration. Four-fifths of the cotton manu-

facturers were out of employ, and the unemployed, altogether perhaps not less than twenty thousand, were an object for Parliament to look to.

Sir JOHN BLAQUIERE and Mr. JOHN CLAUDIUS BERESFORD were for doing something for the relief of the manufacturers, if possible. The latter stated, that he with some other gentlemen had gone through the liberty, in order to ascertain the reality of the distress, and that he had found it real indeed ! That in one street he had found upwards of seventy people lying in fevers arising from want, and that there were no less than twenty thousand men now supported by private contribution ; a dangerous mode, and one which the House ought, if possible, to render unnecessary.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER thought any such measure as that proposed would be useless.

Mr. GRATTAN allowed it was a difficulty to determine how the House should act on this occasion. He rather inclined to think the committee should be ordered ; if gentlemen agreed with him he would make a motion to that purpose ; if not, he should now be silent.

This not meeting any answer, the committee proceeded in the bill, went through it, and report ordered for to morrow.

The India bill was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. FORBES was extremely sorry that a bill disposing of the commerce of the country, and some other measures, had passed through a House very thinly attended indeed. He then adverted to the bill which had been that day debated in the Lords, and would probably soon come before the House ; a bill which to him appeared of the very first importance, and one of the most serious which had ever been entertained in either our Irish or British Parliament. He wished that such a bill might not be discussed in a House consisting of forty or fifty members ; and therefore moved, that the House be called over on Wednesday next, and that the Speaker do write circular letters to the members requiring their attendance.

Mr. HOBART agreed to the motion ; as to the propriety of the measure alluded to, it would be best ascertained on its discussion.

Mr. GRATTAN lamented that such a motion should have been made necessary at this period of the session, when the presence of gentlemen in the country might be in some measure essential to

its peace. He had hoped that the session would have been suffered to go on in the same tranquil manner it had done; the measure, however, which administration had now thought proper to introduce, proposing alterations so novel and important, rendered the motion of his honourable friend indispensable.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. HOBART communicated to the House, previous to its resolving into a committee of supply, a message from his Majesty, signifying that in consequence of his paternal regard for his people of Ireland, &c. he consented that the House, when providing a civil establishment for the support of his crown and dignity, should make such use of the hereditary revenue, &c. as might be thought necessary.

On the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, this communication was referred to the committee of supply; into which the House resolved itself forthwith.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, in substance, that the hereditary revenue and additional duties should make a consolidated fund.—Agreed to.

He then went into a statement of his new arrangement of the civil list; and concluded by moving, that a sum not exceeding 274,000*l.* be granted to his Majesty.

Mr. FORBES objected very strongly to the large sum 15,000*l.* at which secret service money and concordatum were fixed in the list, and promised to contend that it should be diminished on the report; he would also request that the sum to the custom officers, and that to the barrack board should be left among those charges, which were to be annually provided for by parliamentary grants, in order that the abuse and extravagance in those charges might be liable to parliamentary correction.

After a very long conversation on this subject, the motion passed. The committee then adjourned.

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 1793.

Alderman WARREN presented a petition from the corporation of the city of Dublin, praying that a bounty might be granted for the bringing of turf for the supply of the city of Dublin.—Ordered to lie on the table.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER presented a bill to enable his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to raise the sum of

300,000*l.* by debentures or treasury bills; which was read a first time.

Mr. HOLMES reported certain resolutions from the committee, appointed to inquire into the state of the goals of this kingdom; which he read in his place.

The resolutions purported, that a great expence had incurred to the public by transporting of felons; and that if they were kept confined, and at hard labour, it would tend much to the reformation of their morals, and be attended with a considerable saving to the public.

After a short observation from the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, the report was ordered to lie on the table, and to be printed.

Mr. MASON brought up the report of the committee of supply. The first resolution was agreed to.

On the resolution for ascertaining the quantum of the civil list to be granted to his Majesty, at the sum of 274,000*l.* being read,

Mr. FORBES made some objections. He observed that the civil list proposed, was greater by 18,000*l.* than the present cost of the establishment, and at the same time that it added so much to the public expence, it did not prevent the future encrease. He particularly objected to the greatness of the sum at which concordatum was fixed in the new arrangement. The sum of 15,000*l.* at which secret service money and concordatum was estimated in this arrangement, was at least 5000*l.* more than they had ever before amounted to. He objected also to placing on the civil list the salaries of the barrack board, and of those to custom officers; he would have them provided for by annual grants, that they might be continually subject to the controul of Parliament. He objected also to some other items, making in the whole 17,000*l.* and concluded by moving, that the sum to be granted to his Majesty should be 257,000*l.* instead of 274,000*l.* as it stood in the report.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he was happy the objections to the arrangement were so few. The principal difference between the honourable gentleman and him was the 5000*l.* additional on concordatum. He thought it necessary, he said, to leave such a sum at the disposal of the Crown to answer unforeseen exigencies, but at the same time to be accounted for to Parliament; as to leaving the barrack board and custom officers continually liable to parliamentary correction, he believed, that if any mode should at any time be pointed out to the

Crown of making those offices more useful, it would readily be adopted; and as to leaving it in the power of Parliament to abolish the offices themselves, he desired gentlemen would remember that it had not been his promise to lessen the patronage of the Crown. However, reluctantly therefore he must oppose the motion.

Mr. CUFFE defended the barrack board as efficient and useful, and opposed the motion.

Mr. VANDELEUR supported it.

Mr. GRATTAN did not wish to derogate from the merits of Administration in this measure. The motion of his honourable friend he certainly would support, if he thought proper to decide upon it. At the same time he must say, that a difference of opinion about a sum of 5000*l.* in a sum of 274,000*l.* was certainly but a trifle. He thought favourably of the abolition of the places of vice-treasurers, even though the measure was attended with present expence; as it laid a foundation for putting down the offices created in the Buckingham administration, and he hoped the principle would be followed up.

Mr. HOBART allowed that nothing could be more candid than the sentiments of the right honourable gentleman. Though the giving up of this 5000*l.* would be a very great inconvenience to the Government at present, yet, for the sake of unanimity, he would not contend for it if gentlemen were determined to persevere in their opposition. To him it appeared a matter of little consequence whether it were granted annually or permanently provided for the civil list.

Mr. FORBES said, that feeling as he did, this sum under the head of concordatum, was extravagant, he could not think of withdrawing his motion for the reduction of it. At the same time, to prove his wish for unanimity, he would withdraw that part of his motion which related to the other charges, if gentlemen would concede to this.

Mr. HOBART conceded.

The motion then passed, that a sum not exceeding 269,000*l.* be granted to his Majesty; and leave was given to bring in a bill pursuant to the resolution.

FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1793.

Read the third time, and passed, the coal bill.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER presented his civil list bill; which was read the first time.

Mr. HOBART mentioned that in the English civil list bill, the pensions of foreign ministers were not included in the pension list. This exception would be absurd here; but it had been in contemplation to except from the limited pension list, the pensions of very useful and laborious officers, as the secretaries of various boards: but as it was feared this might excite opposition, it was given up. He, however, hoped that in future the particular cases of this description of men would be considered.

Mr. FORBES said, that would depend on the will of Parliament, and on the strength of the particular cases. To except from the list any description of men would be a deviation from the principle laid down.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved for leave to bring in the place bill. Leave being given, he presented the bill forthwith, prefacing the introduction by a few words explanatory of its principle, which is to exclude from the House of Commons all persons who shall accept offices under the Crown, hereafter to be created; also all persons holding offices, the duty of which is inconsistent with their duty in the House of Commons; and also all persons who shall hold pensions during pleasure, or for a term of years under the Crown, or whose wives shall hold such pensions. It is also enacted by the bill, that any office which has been discontinued for five years and revived, or to the salary of which an addition of 100*l.* *per annum* shall be made, shall be considered as a new office.

This bill, he thought, would be considered as having gone as far as was reasonable; it however contained an exception of the treasury officers, in order to give efficacy to the measure of a responsible treasury board, and it excepted also some of the principal officers of state; the Lord Lieutenant's secretary; the secretaries in the civil and military departments.

As to the qualification of members which the bill proposed, he had exactly followed that which had been adopted in Great Britain.

Colonel BLAQUIERE spoke warmly against the principle of the bill.

It was read a first time.

The House sat in committee on the banker's bill.

The **SPEAKER** opposed the principle of the bill, as going to alter the system of banking laws, under which the banking business in this country has prospered since the commencement of the present reign.

The bill was supported by the **Hon. DENIS BROWNE**, as not tending to alter, but to explain, the present banking laws.

Some other gentlemen spoke; but as the House was too thin to admit a division, the further consideration of the bill was postponed until to-morrow.

A clause was introduced, by way of rider to the bill, for explaining and amending the militia law, by which all members of the university, who are not of seven years standing, are made liable to serve in the militia if drawn by ballot. The clause was read three times, and passed.

The revenue bill was read a third time, and passed.

The **CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER** presented a bill, for the support of the honour and dignity of his Majesty's Crown in Ireland; it was read a first time.

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL** presented a bill, for securing the freedom and independence of the House of Commons, by excluding therefrom persons holding any offices under the Crown, to be hereafter created, or holding certain offices or pensions for years or pleasure; which was read a first time.

The militia pay bill was read a third time, and passed.

SATURDAY, JULY 13, 1793.

The spirit license bill was read a first time.

The House then adjourned to Tuesday the sixteenth day of July.

TUESDAY, JULY 16, 1793.

The insolvent bill was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. FORBES, after stating that the object of his place bill was to assimilate the constitution of this country to that of Great

Britain, and observing that the bill now before the House did not go to a disqualification of persons employed in the collection, management, or receipt of the customs or excise, from sitting or voting in Parliament, and if he should acquiesce in it, it might be considered as departing from the principle which his bill went to establish. He should therefore move, that the committee on the place bill be empowered to receive a clause, enacting, that it is contrary to the principles of the British constitution, that any person employed in the collection, management, or receipt of the customs or excise, should sit or vote in Parliament, and enacting that all such persons should be excluded from sitting or voting in any future Parliament.

Mr. Secretary HOBART observed, that there were several other orders before the order for going into a committee on the place bill; and as the House was then not very full, he hoped the honourable gentleman would postpone his motion until the House was full.

To this Mr. FORBES consented.

The House then resolved into further committee on the bill, for the better securing the payment of debts due by bankers.

Mr. HATTON moved, that the chairman do leave the chair; and on the chairman putting the question, the committee divided, when the numbers were,

For the chairman leaving the chair	-	-	29
Against it	-	-	21

Majority for the chairman leaving the chair	8
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The bill was consequently lost.

Mr. FORBES now moved his resolution.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER opposed that any such instruction should be given the committee to receive such a clause. He denied that it had any thing to do with the principle of the British constitution; he admitted it was British policy; it did not seem to him a principle of sense, that a person should be excluded from a seat in Parliament, because he was employed in the management of the revenues. In England the members of the treasury board are not excluded from Parliament, nor are the members of the India board of controul; he should therefore give the clause his negative.

The motion was negatived without a division.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved for leave to bring in a bill, to amend the act for the improvement of the harbour of Dublin.—Leave was given. He then presented the bill; which was read a first time.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 1793.

On the report of the place bill being brought up,

Mr. BARRINGTON stated at length his reasons for disapproving the bill, particularly those clauses of it which relate to the qualification of members of Parliament. He was of opinion that independence was a quality of the mind, which wealth could not give, nor the want of it annihilate. If gentlemen wished effectually to secure the independence of Parliament, they must abolish the vices of avarice and ambition. He concluded by moving, that those clauses should be omitted.

The motion was supported by Mr. MASON; and after some conversation between the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. EGAN, Mr. HOBART, and Mr. GRATTAN, was finally carried in the affirmative.

The order of the day for the second reading of the convention bill being read,

Mr. GRATTAN said, the convention bill is a false declaration of law. I call on the lawyers to say, whether the mere appointment of delegates, or representatives, for the purpose of petitioning the King or Parliament, is alone sufficient to make an unlawful assembly. I call for their authorities; where are their statutes, their adjudications, their opinions? There are none, they know there are none. The law never said, that the mere appointment of a representative for a legal purpose, was an illegal act, or that the preparing a petition to the King or Parliament for the redress of a grievance, was an illegal purpose; I will examine their authorities. An unlawful assembly, says Lord Coke, is where three or more assemble in a body to commit a riot, and do not do it. An unlawful assembly, says Blackstone, is where three or more assemble to do an unlawful act, or to pull down inclosures, and part without doing it. An unlawful assembly, says Hawkins, is not only an assembling to do an act, which, if done, would make the assembly a riot, but it is the meeting in great numbers, with such circumstances of terror as cannot but endanger the public peace, as where great numbers, complaining of a common grievance, meet armed in a warlike manner, to consider of the means of recovering their interests.

Does a deputation, not armed in a warlike manner, nor in any manner, and appointed to do a legal act, come under all or any of these definitions? Does (I recite the substance of the bill) the appointment of any assembly to represent any description, or number of the people, for the purpose of preparing or presenting petitions relative to an public concernment, come under any one of these definitions? No lawyer can say so, because no lawyer could say so without forfeiting his character as a lawyer.

I rely upon it therefore that the declaratory part of this bill has not been, and cannot be supported by law, but that it is a gross and ignorant misrepresentation of the law of the land, which it affects to declare. It is not supported by law, and it is in the face of daily practices. What was the committee of commerce in this country, but such an assembly as is here pronounced illegal? What the delegates from the different counties in England, in 1780, to promote a reduction of the expences of the state? What the conventions in England, in 1782, for the purpose of the reform of Parliament? What the delegates for the procuring the repeal of the test act? What the Presbyterian synod? What the delegates of the Quakers? What the convention in England, for the purpose of restoring Charles the Second? What the convention in Ireland, for bringing about the revolution in 1668; a convention styled a northern association and general council, to direct the operation of associated bodies, united for the purpose of religion and liberty? But I cannot omit one convention to which the present family owes its crown, and which, if this bill is law, was an act of rebellion: I mean that glorious and immortal assembly purporting to represent the people of England, that placed the crown on the head of William and Mary; this assembly comes under every clause in this bill, descriptive of illegal assembly; had such a bill as this been the law of England, and been executed, Lord Somers and the leaders in the revolution must have been apprehended. I have read much of the proceedings of the Catholics at the time of the revolution, but I never before read their justification in the shape of an act of Parliament; for if this declaratory bill be law, then the convention of 1688 was against law, and all its proceedings of course, and amongst others the settlement of the crown illegal, and the resistance of the Catholics to that settlement warrantable by law. Who would have thought that the Catholics would have found in the defamer of their loyalty, an apologist for their rebellion; who would have thought to have found in a bill, professing to be a strong measure in favour of power, the seed of a principle which impeacheth the succession of the crown in the present illustrious family; but so interwoven, fortunately I think it, is the title of the King with the liberties of his people, that no man can be the notorious and intemperate and blasted enemy of the one, without at the same time suggesting a ques-

tion against the other. Such melancholy and gross ignorance does this act betray of the history of both countries, and such a total and shocking disregard to every trace of sound constitutional principle, without which no man can be a safe lawyer, or a good citizen. Blackstone speaks of this law of redress; the law of redress ascertained as at the revolution, and the law of redress unascertained, as in those cases where the governing powers betray their trust, and conspire against the common weal such as the modesty of the law will not suppose, and therefore against which it does not provide a remedy, but leaves the redress open to the exigency; and it is this which Lord Bolinbroke means, when he says the constitution of Great Britain cannot be destroyed, even by Parliament. Kings, like James the Second, may abdicate; Parliaments, like his Parliament, may betray their trust, but the resources of this constitution are such that the people cannot be enslaved, until they themselves are universally corrupt: how then are they to redress themselves when they are betrayed by Parliament; how in such a case—how? but by resorting to what this bill makes a misdemeanor, the appointment or delegation of some body or bodies, who may confer and communicate. This bill, I therefore submit, is not only as a declaration of law false and ignorant, but highly criminal and mischievous, as a provision against those popular resources which Ireland found necessary once, and England found necessary also, and without which neither had been free. Resources which should neither be prohibited nor encouraged. Let me suppose, that the persons who gave their early and almost infant voice against a motion to declare the rights of the Irish Parliament, had succeeded so far as to prevent the House in the end from adopting that measure; let me suppose that the same persons who proposed to give back the substance of those rights, on the question of the memorable propositions, attended as that question was with a senseless petulance of speech, against the character as well as the pretensions of Ireland; let me suppose, that they at that time had prevailed; let me suppose, that those who denied the substance of that declaration of right on the question of the regency, and maintained that a British convention could make a law for the people of Ireland, and that this country was governed by the great seal of England; let me suppose, that they had been able at that time to impose their empty quibble as law, and their shameless assertion as constitution; let me suppose, that he who had declared in this House, that the Irish Parliament had been once bought for half a million, and that it might be made necessary to buy it again for the same or a greater sum; let me suppose, that he had been able to establish the profligacy of this principle, the violence of such measures, or the corruption of such practices, as permanent maxims of Government; let me suppose, that those who, by the precipitation of their temper inflamed, misled, and finally

exposed the Protestant interest, as they have since endeavoured to alienate the Catholic interest, by the petulance of their language; let me suppose, that they had prevailed in any, and still more in all of their desperate enterprises against their country; in such case or cases might not a convention have been necessary? It is true the good sense of some of his Majesty's ministers has checked the arbitrary genius that inspired such sentiments, governed his temper, and renounced his bigotry, and by taking reconciling steps has rendered a convention at present unnecessary, improper and improbable. But in a country where such practices have been resorted to, and such avowal of such profligacy publicly made, shall we say that in no time to come shall there ever be a convention: such a practice, and such an unabashed avowal of such a practice, is the subversion of all government; of English government in Ireland, or of any government, because it is the subversion of those principles moral and religious, without which there can be no government. The minister therefore who proclaimed that it was the custom of the British government to buy the Irish Parliament with half millions, proclaimed by necessary deduction the necessity of an Irish convention; happily, I say, that principle is changed and a convention unnecessary and unwarranted; but in a country where such a thing could even have been publicly advanced by Administration, will you pass an act against any convention at any time to come, or any representation of any description of the people for any specific public purpose. Sir, if this bill had been the law of the land four great events could never have taken place; the independency of the Irish Parliament; the emancipation of the Irish Catholics; the revolution in Great Britain, and the great event that flowed from it, the succession of the Hanoverian family. The enacting part is a bill of popular incapacities instead of a constitution of popular resources; the enacting part is a proviso against future redress in cases of emergency, as the declaratory part is a declaration against the legality of past redress. In this latter light it must be considered as a libel on the revolution; on your own meeting at Dungannon; on all the proceedings of your volunteers, and on the Catholic convention. Where is the use of stigmatising the volunteers by act of Parliament, if in the cause of liberty they sometimes went too far; if the ardour of youth could not at all times command the precaution of old age: draw a veil over the infirmity; remember the essential service; respect the soldier's memory, and do not now, when he is dead, assemble round his grave with the little enemy of his cause and his fame, to write on his tomb this dirty indictment. Some of the gentlemen who now hear me were of the lawyers corp's memorable committee; do they recollect it? That committee was a deputation of armed men representing armed men, and assuming to represent the knowledge of law as well as its battalion, for the pur-

pose of questioning and investigating a matter touching the state, and already decided in Parliament: I am not defending such a meeting, it stands on its own ground and distinct from others; but if I had gone so very far as to be a member of that committee, I would not now prove false to my colours, and pay the minister such a compliment, at the expence of my corps and my cloath, as to acknowledge that my proceedings and theirs influenced by their leaders, were in the face of the law. The Catholic convention is another object libeled by this bill; where is the use of the reflection? not only they who elected and they who composed that convention, but his Majesty, who received its deputies, comes in for his share of the obloquy; it is very evident that one of the many views of this bill is to attack the Catholics; as to any evil designs which the Catholics may be said to entertain, I believe they have none; sure I am, that the charges which have been made against the body of the Catholics are false; if there are grounds, state them; let that which is to appal us all appear; it has proved nothing but vague assertion; nor can we suppose that the Catholics, who, under the penal code, preserved their allegiance, should become disaffected on the moment in which they had acquired such solid and inestimable advantages, and through the agency of the Government they are falsely charged to wish to undermine. The bitterness of expression which in some instances accompanied that grant, cannot exasperate them against the state, but should be rather a subject of additional thanks to the wiser part of Government, who have forced the angry bigot to vote against his speech, with the humiliating privilege of babling against his vote.

It may be to the Catholics further consolation to find, that if they are calumniated, so have been the Protestants; they who acted for the liberties of this country; they who since 1782 struggled for bills, which, in part, Government has meritoriously acceded to, are for that very conduct, by the same false witness, vituperated expressly as men endeavouring to foment jealousies and disunion between Great Britain and Ireland. Satisfied with the success of some of their great measures, these men have learned to despise that political jury, whose testimony against public character is now exploded as his principles.

Sir, this bill not only reflects on numbers of his Majesty's subjects as guilty of a misdemeanor, but it involves them in the penalty; it is an *ex post facto* law of pains and penalties: if this bill be law, every man who composed the Catholic convention is now liable to be prosecuted for a misdemeanor; it might so happen that some of the gentlemen who vote for the bill might be their jury or their judges, how would they act; would they on oath or as on the bench pronounce those men guilty of a misdemeanor; and which they are now ready to assert as members of Parlia-

ment: those gentlemen may not only happen to try such offenders, but are liable to be tried themselves, for such offences; for they were certainly those criminal and illegal deputies described in the act. I do not suppose Government will ever think of prosecuting them, but if she should, she will after the passing this act have against the legality of their conduct the authority of the legislature and their own. I have objected to this bill as an innovation on the constitution; I object to it also as an innovation on the system of criminal jurisprudence: it puts the peace officer in the place of the court of justice, in cases where there is neither tumult nor danger of tumult; it is true the common law makes him the judge of the imminent danger to which the society is exposed, from a numerous body armed and proceeding to execute an illegal purpose, or a legal purpose in an illegal tumultuous manner; but it is the force or imminent danger of force, that brings the subject under the cognisance of the subordinate magistrate; the illegality alone would only bring him under the cognisance of the courts of justice. Where there are circumstances of force and horror accompanying an illegal act, then grows the power of the peace officer, for he is not the guardian of the law, but the conservator of the peace. But this bill gives that officer in the instance of a peaceful meeting assembled to do a legal act, as to frame a petition for those who have deputed them so to do. This bill, I say, gives the peace officer the power to judge of the fact of the deputation; of the manner of exercising that trust, and of the public nature of the object of it, with right of entry and a power to call in the military: here is the principle of the riot act applied to the peaceful communication of sentiment—and is an innovation of the principles of the criminal law of these countries. The objects of this bill is to stigmatise the Catholic convention and prevent the reform of Parliament; but the pretences for this bill, I think, are three; the Defenders, the United Irishmen and an imaginary convention at Athlone: the last is not to take place, and on the two first the bill will have no operation. Gentlemen must surely know that either this convention is not at all to take place, or taking place, would be feeble and frivolous. Such a convention as I have seen described would be indeed unseasonable, and, I will add, wholly inadmissible; but such a bill as this, is not the way to defeat it. You remember a much more formidable convention than this supposed one of Athlone, a convention of armed men representing the volunteer army; sitting at the Rotunda with a guard, and preparing plans for Parliament: some of the friends of this bill, members of this House, were deputies of that convention; accepted delegation, sat and voted, and whatever evil was incurred, had a full share in it. But how did the then Attorney General act, did he alter the constitution under pretence of defending it; did he make use of

popular excesses to abridge the liberty of the subject; did he give an opinion contrary to law, and then get Parliament to give an influenced judgment in support of it, and invade the constitution under pretence of declaring the law? No; when the convention attempted to act he framed a resolution, which purported the defence of the constitution against all encroachment: the consequence was the convention dispersed, and the constitution stood unaltered and unimpaired—unimpaired either by the encroachment of a convention, or of a convention bill. In the present case the prorogation of Parliament cannot interfere, unless Government prefers a long prorogation; and sure I am that if such a thing as the described convention is to take place, it were much better to meet it with the precedent I have mentioned than with this bill; but it is evident no such thing is now apprehended: the spirit of the people does not beat high, and because the spirit is not high this bill is brought forward. The friends of the bill have seized the opportunity of public panic, which certain excesses have excited: I condemn both—the excesses and the remedy; instead of either I am for the constitution of England.

He then moved, “that the bill be read a second time on the ninth of September next.”

The ATTORNEY GENERAL opposed the motion—He said, that if he had had any doubts on his mind of the truth of the declaration in the preamble, as to the illegality of the assemblies described by the bill, the right honourable gentleman himself had removed them, by contradicting the opinion he had at first laid down so positively; for he had said that a meeting, such as had been described, should be withstood, and he knew the right honourable gentleman's principles and his love for the constitution too well, to suppose he would have an assembly withstood which was not illegal. He denied that the bill had any retrospect particularly to the Catholic convention; it originated merely from a professed design to call a convention, to represent the people and overturn the Parliament. He alluded to the Society of United Irishmen, whose agitations had greatly disturbed the city and destroyed public credit. He mentioned the late meeting at Dungannon as a consequence of the invitations of this society; and preparatory only to a general meeting at Athlone in the course of the summer. He declared it, as his well-weighed opinion, that such an assembly was unlawful. As to the authorities that had been adduced to prove it was not, he observed, that they had not been rightly understood; for that in Hawkins' nothing more was necessary to constitute an unlawful assembly, but that they were attended with circumstances of terror, whether armed or not. He had been called on for adjudication or statute to prove the illegality. He said, things might be unlawful against which no statute nor adjudication exists. Otherwise precedents

of adjudication could never have been had. This, of representative assemblies distinct from Parliament, he thought was one of those. For a representative assembly superior to, or even co-ordinate with, Parliament, was, he was convinced, already against the principles of the constitution. The principle of the bill, therefore, must be good; as to any imperfection in the clauses it might be corrected in a committee. The right honourable gentleman misconceived the bill if he supposed it went to prevent all deputation; if there was any thing of that tendency in the bill, he would agree to its correction in a committee: it went only to prevent assemblies purporting to be the general representatives of the people, not representation for any pre-conceived object.

The right of petitioning was not affected by the bill; that right, however, could not be exercised by delegation; each individual knows his own grievances, and must petition for himself.—The people could not elect delegates for the purpose of considering whether an object should be petitioned for, or not—whether the law was already what the preamble of the bill declared it or not, was of little importance; the question was, whether such ought to be the law or not. If the House believed that such a convention was intended, they should consider well whether it ought not to be prevented before it be too late.—The bill appeared to him a good mode of providing against that meeting, and until the right honourable gentleman should point out some better one, the bill should meet his approbation.—The right honourable gentleman had said that the bill was intended to prevent a reform, and that it would make one necessary: he solemnly declared he knew no object of the bill but one—that was, to prevent this threatened convention, which, from a late publication from the United Irishmen, appeared by its mode of election to be still more dangerous than it had appeared hitherto. It was to obviate this danger, only, that the noble peer had introduced this bill into the other House; he was confident that so small an object as reform had not on this occasion been at all in his mind. The right honourable gentleman had argued from the revolution of 1688, and asserted that if such a bill as this had existed any such revolution could never have been accomplished.—For his part, he hoped there would no more be occasion for any such: he admired it however, no man more, as the foundation of our liberties.—The bill, he contended, could not have the effect that the right honourable gentleman wished to attribute to it. The crisis for such an event as the convention in 1688 are extremes which no law can have reference to: and he thought it worth observing, that even the convention in 1688 was itself indemnified by a subsequent act of parliament, a circumstance from which if any thing can be drawn, it is an argument against the legality even of that singular assembly.

Mr. GRATTAN rose to explain: he had not said that the assembly would be illegal, but that if it entertained the views, and met in the circumstances which he had heard, he thought the assembly ought to be withstood

Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE spoke on the same side with the Attorney General. He paid some handsome compliments to the moderation of Mr. Grattan; and observed, that the extent of this very evil in Ireland had hitherto prevented an adjudication against it; for the country had been now for ten years past reducing disorder to system, and giving authority to public outrage. As to the convention of 1688, even Blackstone did not say it was conformable to statute law, and every convention that had sat in Dublin for ten years past, had been clear violations of the constitution. The interval of their discontinuation was the most happy Ireland ever knew.—Of the Catholic committee he would say little, but that he thought their valedictory admonition would have been better let alone. They should not have become preachers of sedition the very moment they were seated in the temple of the constitution.

He declared, that if conventions of any kind were suffered to assume authority in public affairs, the constitution fell to the ground. If the caution of gentlemen hesitated at the novelty of this measure, it should consider the pressure of the occasion. The bill, he said, enacted only what must be law in every country; that law had hitherto been too weak, and long impunity had misled men as to the nature of the action.

He then exhibited forcibly the ill consequences that must result from the people being too deeply immersed in politics, and what is called popular discussion. To shew what wild and mischievous notions this turn had given to the public mind, and also the principles of those who promoted a convention in the North, he read a variety of extracts from the Northern Star, consisting of resolutions, &c. and entered into at the election of delegates for the Dungannon meeting.

He concluded by declaring, he apprehended no evil from the bill; but if any exceptionable clauses were in it, they might be corrected in the committee.

Mr. HARDY supported the motion. He declared himself no friend to conventions: they must indubitably produce one of two effects; either they must degrade Parliament, or they must exhaust the strength of the people, and deprive them of that constitutional energy which they ought to exert at proper occasions.

He entered into a short view of the different conventions that have met in Ireland within a few years, and shewed, that where they attempted to dictate to Parliament, Parliament was enabled to disperse them with ease, as was the case of 1783; when their

propositions were founded in reason, and Parliament made reasonable concessions, then they dispersed themselves, as the late Roman Catholic convention.

He thought Parliament did not think ought of itself, if it did not depend for support rather on the many popular acts of this session, than on one solitary law; they paid a bad compliment to the heads and hearts of their countrymen, if they did not believe that they would rather sit down contented participators of an amended constitution, than become the dupes of knaves and fools. If the people were so senseless, the bill might go back to the Lords with all his heart, for he knew not what would satisfy them or prevent their ruin.

Colonel BLAQUIERE and Mr. WESLEY spoke against the motion, and for the bill.

Doctor BROWNE spoke warmly and for a considerable time, against the bill, and for Mr. Grattan's motion: he concluded by a very happy figure—"For God's sake," said he, "if you must sacrifice on the altar of peace, do not immolate liberty for the victim."

Mr. PERY was in favour of the bill; as it was,

Sir HENRY CAVENDISH said, he voted for it as a measure of caution, and one that would save much blood; to postpone it would be to accelerate the misfortunes of the people, who were deceived at present in consequence of a sixteen year's attempt to mislead them.

Mr. CHARLES COOTE was for the bill; and

Mr. CURRAN against it, confessed himself struck with horror at hearing the first legal officer of the Crown leaving the strict letter of the law, which in a case like this should be his only guide, and appealing to a shout of the House of Commons—an inconsiderate "Hear him"—for the support to a question of law, appealing to the uninformed judgments of country gentlemen for justification in subverting one of the principal pillars of the British Constitution.

He shewed that the constituent when he elects a representative, does not part with all his powers, but retains above all a right to watch the conduct of Parliament;—that the right of the people to petition by delegation was confirmed by the British law which prevented more than twenty people from presenting a petition, and of course these twenty must be delegates of the rest;—and that this very principle had been discussed in the British Parliament in 1780, and confirmed to the people.—He then argued

on the impolicy of the measure, and concluded by declaring for the motion of postponing the second reading.

Mr. STANLEY, Mr. CORRY, Sir BOYLE ROCHE, Sir JOHN FREKE, Sir JOHN PARNEL, Mr. ARCHDALL, Mr. TOLER, Mr. DENIS BROWNE, Mr. OGLE, Mr. JOHN O'NEIL, Mr. M. SMITH, Mr. FRENCH, Mr. KNOX, and Mr. HOBART, spoke in favour of the bill, and against the motion.

Mr. HOBART declared nothing gave him more pain, than that the debate or this bill should have extended to such length, or that it should, on the close of the session, create any thing like a disunion of sentiment. He declared, that nothing but the very alarming state to which the country had been reduced by a spirit of popular commotion, excited by conventions usurping the privileges of representation, and assuming to controul Parliament, could have induced him to consent to the introduction of this bill; and even the nobleman, who had brought it into the other House, before he had done so, had considered it over and over again, and did not bring it forward until absolute necessity called for some effectual measure to stem the torrent of sedition, at a time when writs had been issued by the society, called United Irishmen, for the purpose of assembling the convention at Athlone, and under a conviction, that if Parliament should break up without adopting the bill, which in his idea never did, nor never was intended to meddle with the constitutional rights of the people, the constitution itself might be subverted before Parliament could be assembled.

Mr. DUQUERY spoke for the motion.

Mr. GRATTAN, being exhausted, deferred reply to the various arguments that had been advanced against him, till the committee this evening.

At four o'clock this morning the question on Mr. Grattan's motion being put, the numbers were,

Ayes — — 27

Noes — — 128

Majority — — 101

Tellers for the Ayes, Mr. DUQUERY and Dr. ARTHUR BROWNE; for the Noes, Mr. WESLEY and Mr. PERY.

THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1793.

On the order of the day for going into a committee on the bill to prevent the election or appointment of conventions, or other unlawful assemblies, under pretence of preparing or presenting public petitions or other addresses to his Majesty or the Parliament, being read,

Mr. GRATTAN said, he intended to move that it be an instruction to the committee to receive a clause to limit the duration of this act. If gentlemen would agree to this, he should make his particular objections in the committee.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, he could by no means agree to the introduction of such a clause consistently with his arguments of yesterday, namely, that the bill was only declaratory of what was already the law of the land.

Mr. GRATTAN—I put a question to the learned gentlemen—are the two circumstances of delegation and public concernment sufficient to constitute an unlawful assembly, except that assembly be the House Commons? or in other words, must any delegation of any description of his Majesty's subjects, other than this House, for the purpose of promoting any redress of any grievance in church or state, be considered as an unlawful assembly?—They have given me no answer; but they have stated a case which is another case, and which is a quibble, and not an answer. They have said, that a representative of the people, other than the House of Commons is an unlawful assembly: it may be so; yet a delegation for promoting redress in matter of public concernment may not be so, because that delegation may not be, nor assume to be, a representative of the people, but of a certain description thereof—and yet the bill, both in its preamble and declaration, makes such assembly illegal. The case, therefore, stated by the gentlemen is no more a defence of the bill than it is an answer to my question.

The bill states, that any representation of any description of his Majesty's subjects for procuring redress in any manner in any matter of public concernment, is an unlawful assembly.

The learned gentlemen say, that a representative of the people is so—which is not the case of that body who only assemble to represent in a particular matter, a particular province, county, city, town, district, or description of people. The case submitted to the gentlemen, and the case contained in the bill, rest illegality on the act of delegation for procuring in any manner redress in matters of public concernment.—The case stated by the learned gentlemen, seems to rest the point of illegality on the generality of the representation, and their reason seems to rest it

there still more than their case; for instance, they say a representative of the people, other than the House of Commons, is an unlawful assembly, because the House of Commons are exclusively the representatives of the people, and therefore to attempt to appoint a second House of Commons is unlawful, because incompatible with the first. This reason in support of this case is a surrender of the principle of the bill. I do not say, the bill is betrayed;—but its defence is waived by the law servants of the Crown—they acknowledge that there is neither statute nor adjudication in support of the principle of the bill;—but they say there is reason, and that reason they alledge to be this—that there cannot be at one time two representatives of the people; whereas the principle of the bill is, that any representation not of the people only, but of any description whatever thereof, for a public purpose, save only this House, is an unlawful assembly.

The case and reasoning of the learned gentlemen would comprehend nothing but a national convention; but the cases, principle, and description of the bill would comprehend every subdivision of delegation for public matter. The Presbyterian committee, of which I read a petition yesterday, and which the Protestant Dissenters of England have appointed by delegation to promote redress of particular grievances, touching church and state, viz. the repeal of the Test-act—the delegation of Quakers, if that delegation should join in an humble address for the commutation of tythes—the Presbyterian synod, if that synod should presume to interfere in behalf of their flock in matters touching abuses in church or state;—all these come within the letter of the act, though by no means within the argument which attempts to defend it. They are all delegations, and in the cases I have suggested, would be employed in procuring redress of some abuses either in church or state.

I have thus merely considered the argument as far as it declined the question I proposed, and must say that the only sense to be extracted from the argument is, that there cannot be at once two representatives of the people for the same purposes—but for different purposes—it does not follow but there may.

The House of Commons, whom we will for argument's sake suppose the real representatives of the people, is appointed for the exercise of certain powers—powers of impeachment, powers of grant, and powers of legislation; certainly any attempt on the part of the people to give a second order of delegates authority to exercise such powers, would in the highest degree be illegal—or what might seem to imply the same thing, the appointment of a second order of delegates to represent the people generally without any specific limitation, would be highly criminal and illegal, because that would imply the powers I have described—but the

appointment of delegates for a specific and legal purpose—for instance, promoting the redress of a particular abuse touching the church or state—as the reform of Parliament—a limitation of public expences—a repeal of the test act; such delegations which do or have existed in England and Ireland, would not be an interference with the jurisdiction of the House of Commons, nor within the reason of the case of the learned Gentlemen.—The people in electing members to serve in Parliament part with some of their powers, and others they retain—the power of petitioning, of instructing, and of delivering their sense on abuses in church and state, they retain—with these powers they of necessity retain another, that of forming themselves into such voluntary organization, of committee, delegates, or representatives, whichever you please to call them, for the purpose either of preparing their petitions or of framing their resolution, or collecting their dispersed opinions into one consistent instrument, on the object of the particular grievance, with a view to render the exercise of the power they retain, consistent, tranquil, and operative.

In the proceedings of such delegation care must be taken to preserve the peace, and in specifying its object care must be taken to observe the law—but if the destination of such delegation is lawful and the proceedings peaceful, I know of no law, and the learned gentlemen have adduced neither law nor reason to pronounce it an unlawful assembly—I see plainly the necessity of leaving such powers free, because I see a time may come, we have seen when such a time did come, when the Being of the constitution shall depend on the exercise of such power. Suppose a House of Commons as was the case of the Middlesex election conspire against the elective rights of the community.—Suppose a House of Commons as was the case of the perpetual mutiny bill under the influence of the minister vote the army for ever—are the people to have no power of interfering, or, which is the same thing no power of communicating in order to make their interference operative and consistent? It has been said that representative conventions are illegal; but the question of legality depends on what those representative conventions are—if they are national representative conventions assuming expressly, or by the generality of their appointment, the functions of the House of Commons, they are more than illegal—but if they are representative conventions appointed for a special purpose to prepare a petition or to promote the redress of a particular grievance, such as may obtain in church or state; for such a representative convention as committees of correspondence, or the delegation of the Quakers, or the synod of the Presbyterians, or such as the delegates of the Protestant Dissenters now existing in England—I hold it that such representative conventions are not illegal.

The honourable member who had made the observation—made this distinction, for the representative convention he condemned as a mock parliament plainly intimating the representative conventions not in any degree assuming the function of a Parliament did not come within his objection—it would seem therefore that it is the assumption of parliamentary functions and not the act of representation, nor the public concernment which is its object, that constitute the illegality; and this observation brings the argument of the honourable member to the same principle with that of his honourable friend—that the law will not tolerate two Houses of Commons, as the principle of the argument is the same, so shall be my answer, that the assemblies described in the bill are not only such as assume the functions of a House of Commons, nor such as assume the character of unlimited representation, but such as are descriptions of his Majesty's subjects however small, met on or any public purpose whatsoever.

This argument, then, like the other, leaves the bill undefended. But it is advanced in further support of this argument, that the House of Commons would not receive a petition from a delegation; and it is thence inferred that the act of delegation is illegal; but it does not strike me in that manner. It would seem that this observation could only reach delegation, for the purpose of presenting or subscribing petitions, not preparing petitions, nor corresponding, nor digesting resolutions, nor promoting redress of specific grievances to all which the bill goes, to none of which the argument goes, nor does the argument even go so far as to prove the illegality of any delegation whatsoever; it only proves, that delegations for the particular purpose of presenting or subscribing petitions, is fruitless; but it does not prove the delegates to be an unlawful assembly; or that the peace officer can disperse them, or the crown officer prosecute them. You cannot petition Parliament by attorney—does it follow you cannot appoint one? Association for the peace—delegations for redress—clubs for society, are all voluntary conventions, without seal, certificate, or incorporation. Parliament cannot know them by that description which they give themselves, does it follow that the law would punish them as an unlawful assembly?

The object of these meetings has in general been to propose matter for petition, or to collect or combine the public mind to one specific mode of remedy, and not in the person of delegates to approach the legislature: and it is against this proceeding the bill is directed. The bill leaves the county meeting free—all its designs is to prevent the communication of county with county, and city with city, on the subject of public redress, and the reform of Parliament above all other subjects: and the reason is very obvious;—the resolutions of such county or aggregate meetings have proved generally effectual; but the resolutions formed on representative or delegated meetings have generally proved ef-

sequal; the bill leaves the people such resources as have been abortive, and only takes away all which have been successful.

It has been said in support of this bill that the preamble contains in it no point of law whatsoever, but is one proposition, only stating a matter of fact; this I must deny; the preamble contains two propositions, the one, matter of fact, or rather prophecy, which is positive, the other matter of law, which is implicative.—It describes an unlawful assembly in these words—“an assembly purporting to represent the people.”—(but it does not stop here) “or any description or number of the people, under pretence of preparing or presenting petitions, complaints, remonstrances, or declarations to the king or parliament for alterations of matter in church or state, alledged grievances or other public concernment”: but if there was any doubt whether the preamble implied, there can be no doubt but that the declaratory part expresses that any assembly of delegates from any description or number of his Majesty’s subjects for the purpose of procuring by petition, or in any other manner, an alteration in matters established in church or state is unlawful.—Let me ask gentlemen of the bar, what was the committee of lawyers corps in 1782; was not that very assembly, a delegation from a certain description of his Majesty’s subjects to procure an alteration in matters established in state—a delegation to consider a public concernment—a delegation purporting to promote the redress of grievance. There is not a description in the act that delineates an unlawful assembly, under which that committee does not come. Who appointed that committee?—A certain numerous description of his Majesty’s subjects—What was the object of their delegation?—To consider matter of state then settled by the law—that is, to report whether the measures taken by the Parliaments of the two kingdoms were as unanimously alledged by the Parliament of Ireland adequate in point of law to liberate this kingdom from the legislative interference of Great Britain.—And what was their determination?—In direct contradiction to a settlement concluded by both Houses of Parliament. They reported that the remedy which our Parliament had deemed sufficient, was inadequate, and they concluded with an redress of their own, namely, that a bill of renunciation ought to pass in the Parliament of England, and a bill of right in the Parliament of Ireland.

Here is a delegation taking into consideration every thing which this bill forbids—public concernment—redress of grievance, and a particular matter, vitally affecting the state, and just settled by the law, and here is a report of that delegation opening that settlement to procure an alteration therein.

There were, indeed, two circumstances which distinguish this delegation from the others which the bill describes and declares to be unlawful—the committee were delegated by an armed

body, to impeach the sufficiency of a parliamentary settlement. Do I wish to reflect on their motives? No; they thought the independency of this country was a matter of state, too invaluable, though settled by law, to be left entirely to any body of men, even the House of Commons or to any individual of that House, however well disposed. It was an occasion in which zeal, and even suspicion, was commendable. I differed from the members of that committee in the doctrines they then advanced against the proceedings of Parliament. I differ from some of them in the doctrines they now advance against the proceedings of their own committee—and it is by a singular fatality that it should fall to my lot to resist, and to theirs to support a bill whose preamble and whose declaration do, in the fullest and least equivocal manner pronounce their committee to have been an unlawful assembly, and their conduct to have been illegal.

While I combat the argument, I must give every due praise to the abilities of the learned gentleman who advanced it—for taste as a scholar, knowledge as a lawyer, and extensive, liberal, and deep erudition. It has been said that the bill does not affect committees appointed *bona fide* to prepare petitions or other matter, but only such as make petition a pretence for delegation—ridiculous! The bill goes against all delegation for public matter, and provides that the pretence of petitioning shall not cover the transaction.

Gentlemen having in my humble apprehension mistated the law, proceed to my certain knowledge to mistate the fact—and they insist that in England no convention or committee such as the bill describes has taken place, and this they assign as a reason why in England there is no prohibitory statute. I mentioned yesterday one delegation this moment existing in England—a delegation from no less a description of his Majesty's subjects than the Protestant Dissenters in England, appointed for the express purpose of procuring an alteration in a matter by law established in church and state—the repeal of the test act. I beg to remind gentlemen of another delegation that took place in London; it was a delegation from that description of his Majesty's subjects which comprehends the manufacturing interest of England, and was deputed to consider matter that related to the state of both kingdoms—the commercial propositions. I beg leave to turn the recollection of gentlemen to other conventions in England—to those that sat in London in 1780, consisting of a deputation from above sixteen counties, delegating representatives for the purpose of forming Committees of correspondence, to procure an alteration in matters touching the state—or in other words to frame petitions for these several counties for the reduction of the expences of the Government; and further to promote the objects of those petitions, among the number of those delegates were some from the city of London, appointed by an act of the

corporation, attended with a resolution, that the Recorder of London should be assistant to the delegation, a man of great celebrity and knowledge both as a lawyer and a constitutionalist.

There were other most respectable names members and chairmen of these committees, the Duke of Portland, Lord Spencer, Mr. Fox—the name of Cavendish, and most of the whig interest of England. The Duke of Rutland was chairman to one of the committees. There was our Burke; there were others; there was the Marquis of Buckingham and Mr. Grenville. I do not find any proceeding against these meetings as unlawful assemblies, and yet all these came within the letter and spirit of this bill; they came within the letter of your act, for they were delegations from certain descriptions of his Majesty's subjects to procure an alteration in matter touching the state, *viz.* the expences of the king's government; they come within the spirit, because the object of these committees was to procure, as that of the bill is to prevent concert—concert among the people, in redressing those abuses in the state, which a House of Commons, as is now returned by boroughs, and influenced by ministers, will not attend to, except when such concert out of doors, as happened in counties in almost all great questions, and did happen in the case of those very committees, renders it necessary to attend and concede.—I have shewn you the practice in England, and that the advocates of the bill in matter of fact at least are entirely mistaken. I think it has been already shewn that they are so in matter of law, and I beg to ask whether it is reasonable to suppose that such practice, so general, so repeated, and so countenanced, is illegal, and whether such doctrines as the advocates of the bill have advanced, unsupported by statute, unwarranted by adjudication, and in the face of such a number of precedents, indeed of daily experience, and of their own memorable example, is law? I must therefore conclude this part of my answer by observing, that the arguments of this bill do not appear to have the support either of the law or of fact.

As to the expediency, I beg to speak a few words. This bill is said to be an expedient to restore peace;—why, then, is it a reflection? why do the preamble and the declaration pronounce every man who has been a delegate—all the volunteers, the delegates at Dungannon, the delegates of the convention, the committee of the lawyers corps, and the corps that appointed that committee—the committee of the Catholics, their late convention, and all the Catholics who appointed that convention, that is the whole Catholic body, offenders—men guilty of an unlawful assembly, and this moment liable to be prosecuted?—For so much has the bill in object, not the peace of the country, but reflection on great bodies, and the gratification of spleen at the expence of the constitution, by voting false doctrine into

law, and the brightest passages of your history into unlawful assemblies.

Gentlemen have conceived this bill an expedient to quell the insurgents; let them read the bill. It is not a riot act; the riot act seemed forgotten until a friend of mine put it into his temporary statute bill; it does not go against riots that are, but conventions that are not.—The title of the bill as first brought in, was to prevent riots and tumults arising from conventions; but as the bill had nothing to say to riots, and no riots appeared to have arisen from conventions, such title was in decency dropped, and the real object of the bill professed—an act against conventions.

The bill, therefore, neither is, nor professes to be a bill against riots; it is only an expedient against conventions, and only an expedient for peace, as far as conventions now disturb it; Sir, there are none.

But gentlemen say, a national convention at Athlone was intended. Sir, I do believe that such a one was intended some time ago, and that now it is not so; or, if now intended, that it would be trifling and contemptible. But if that is the object of the bill, direct the bill to that object. Do not extend the bill to every delegation from any county, city, town, district, from any description of any number of his Majesty's subjects appointed to procure redress in any abuse relating to church or state. My objection to your bill is, that it is a trick—making a supposed national convention at Athlone in 1793, a pretext for preventing delegation for ever.

I have already said, that such a meeting as was invited to assemble at Athlone should be withstood. I know not what such meeting would be, except from the summonses read by gentlemen in this House, and such a meeting, I repeat it, as would assemble pursuant to such summonses, with such a view, and under all the circumstances held out, should be withstood;—for such a meeting would not be an assembly to promote the reform of Parliament, but to put itself in the place of Parliament;—But does it follow, therefore that the people should lose the power of delegation for ever.—I acknowledge the people retain their right to hold primary assemblies, as meet in the aggregate; but do not we know that such meetings have been inefficacious—the object not of your respect, but of the courtiers scorn and ridicule; and, therefore, the people have resorted to delegates who have given to their wishes concert and effect; and, therefore, I fear it is, that a bill has been introduced when Parliamentary reform is in contemplation, to prevent such delegation, leaving to the people such popular meetings as gentlemen flatter themselves cannot have any popular effect.

My apprehension, therefore, is, that the supposed meeting at Athlone is a pretence, and that the real object of this bill is to

prevent in future all popular effect whatsoever, particularly now, when reform has been proposed in this House, a measure offensive to all men who dislike the people—offensive to most of those who dislike the Catholics, and detestable to those men who hate both. Does it follow, because the supposed national convention at Athlone should be prevented, that all committees of correspondence on the subject of redress should be put down for ever? No county, no city, no description of men can delegate a few individuals to concert the most legal and effectual method of procuring in an acknowledged abuse a temperate remedy.

I am against this bill, because it is not confined to the supposed convention, but is levelled against all popular delegation in all time to come; and as I was against the excesses of some of the people which shook the principles of Government, so am I now against excesses on the other side, which attack the principles of liberty. I consider the bill as one excess reforming another—as the violence of one side attacking the constitution, as that of the other did the government: It seems to me to be compounded of a dislike to the people in general, and the Catholics in particular—a concern at past acquisition, and a present apprehension of the reform of parliament: it avails itself of the present panic to abridge popular rights, and it finds support in sanguine but weak minds, who know there is a disease, but have not sense enough to discover the remedy, and think that a convention bill is to restore us all to peace; who think, that in time of local disturbance, the remedy is a bill, not against the particular disturbance, but against liberty and the people.

I must repeat my conviction against this bill, and beg to resort to the memories of gentlemen wherein to deposit my entire disapprobation of this measure.

Mr. MARCUS BERESFORD thought that the preamble of the bill contained only a recital of facts which no man could deny, and asserted that it contained no position of law whatsoever. He then went into a history of the origin and progress of conventions in this country, and argued from their mischievous effects to their illegality. The examples that had been adduced to prove that representative assemblies were tolerated in England, he said, did not make against the bill, for those deputations were very different indeed from the national conventions that had taken place in Ireland.—He was against limiting the act to the particular assembly, because in doing so, the House would declare the legality of all other assemblies of that kind, and twenty other such assemblies would arise under different names.

A temporary statute would have the same effect as to time; for it would legalize all such assemblies, except during the period in which it should prohibit them.—Whoever was of opinion

that the bill only declared the law of the land, and the sanction of the first lawyers in the country had been given to that opinion, would vote with him for its being permanent and general.

Mr. BURTON CONYNGHAM spoke against the amendment.

Major DOYLE, in a speech of much conciliation, expressed his regret that any measure should be brought forward at this time, which was likely to create a difference of opinion;—for surely nothing could tend more to the public tranquillity, and of course to the security of Government, than that the session should have closed with the most perfect unanimity; and the people be impressed with the idea, that the measures of Government were such as met the approbation of those who did not usually concur with the minister. He said, it had been candidly admitted from the treasury bench, that opposition, as it was generally called, had shewn, during the session every wish to strengthen and support the Government of the country, in the preservation of the public peace.—He would say for himself, and those with whom he had the honour to act, that they would be always found ready to give every strength to the executive Government, that did not trench upon the just rights and privileges of the people.

With respect to the bill, he said, if it were so distinctly defined as to attach solely to the object it professed to meet, namely, the national convention at Athlone, it should have his decided approbation.—But, in its present state, he thought it too loose and undefined, and likely (without some modification) to raise doubts and fears in the minds of the most peaceable and well-disposed subjects. The bill must have reference either to the Catholic convention, which is past—the riots and tumults which at present exist—or to the national convention to meet hereafter.

With the respect to the first (the Catholic Convention) I regret, said he, the manner in which it had been introduced into the debate. By assuming that that assembly is the source of this measure, what object can you propose to yourselves?—Do you mean by innuendo to censure the benignity which has flowed from the throne, at the prayer of that very convention, which the bill by implication stigmatizes?—Will you, by a sentence grounded upon novel and *ex post facto* declarations of law, condemn an assembly whose proceedings you have already so far approved, that you have admitted their prayer, and ratified its justice, by the immunities which you in consequence bestowed, and observe, that this sentence is passed against an assembly no longer existing, for it spontaneously dissolved itself?—Now, Sir, it either was, or it was not, illegal; if it were illegal, Parliament was the cause of the illegality—you drove the Catholics to a convention—you refused their original petition, assigning as the

reason, "that the framers of it affected to speak the sentiments of the whole body, without having been duly deputed."

To obviate your objection, they had recourse to systematic delegation, and thus formed the convention; but if it were illegal you should have punished it; did you do so?—No; you rewarded it, by attending to its prayer. If thus you legalize it, how can the necessity for the present bill be justified by a reference to the illegality of that meeting? Now, Sir, as to the present tumults, no man can more deplore them.—I lament exceedingly the fate of those deluded people who have fallen victims; to the just vengeance of the laws. But why search for distant reasons when an obvious one presents itself.—A new experiment has been tried, in the formation of a national militia. Certainly there can be no more constitutional force; but unfortunately the ignorant peasantry have not had time to know its value; and as ignorance is always suspicious, they view that establishment as an object of terror, which upon experience they will find their best security. I feel the more justified in attributing the present disgraceful tumults to the misconception of the people on this subject rather than to politics or religion, when I reflect the very same effects were produced by the introduction of the militia act in England, many lives were lost upon that occasion, and several counties in that kingdom were for many years without carrying the act into effect, until the people saw the good consequences of the militia, and of their own accord came into the measure; it will be so in this country if you will give it time. Be the cause of the riots what it may, they must certainly be resisted by the energy of the Government, but surely (if possible) it is better to prevent than punish, and to counteract the misrepresentations of the seditious, by explaining to the people the advantages of the system they had been taught to dread.

It has, I fear, been mischievously insinuated amongst the peasantry, that they are liable to be sent on foreign service. Their suspicions on that subject have been considerably increased by the recollection of a circumstance which every man must remember. A regiment was raised by a gentleman of another country, under the idea of serving within the realm; from being clad in green, were, by the people, called the Green Linnets. These men were assembled without arms, for the declared purpose of inspecting their necessaries, when they were immediately surrounded by four regiments of infantry, and one of cavalry, and marched like convicts on board ship for the West Indies, from whence few, if any, ever returned.

A procedure so infamous, as to damn any government, in even the most uncivilized country;—the impression is still fresh upon the public mind. I have observed, within a few days past, a circumstance which I am confident must be unknown to the right honourable Secretary, but which might be used by ill-disposed

persons to keep up their suspicions among the lower orders of the people.

Sir, I have seen with much surprise, and indeed indignation, a number of hackney coaches, surrounded by guards with fixed bayonets, conveying a number of persons to the water-side. I really conceived that they had been convicts, and their destination Botany Bay; but upon enquiry, I was gravely told, that they were volunteers for his Majesty's service. Sir, I mention this circumstance, and I dwell upon the subject of the militia, because I am anxious that the unfortunate deluded people should be undeceived, and no longer subject to the danger resulting from opposing the laws; and as I am certain that the discussion upon this subject will be disseminated throughout the country, I wish to tell the people, whose interest I have so much at heart, that every man who hears me knows, "that no militia man can by law, be sent out of the kingdom; and that any thing they may hear to the contrary is intended to deceive and to abuse them. So that this bill can no more have reference to the present riots than to the Catholic convention, unless indeed we adopt the curious anachronism, that the riots in June and July are occasioned by a convention that may or may not meet in September.

And now, Sir, as to the reference of the bill to that convention. If its object is solely declaratory, no additional strength is given to Government by the bill, and this objection attends it, that it is harsh and irritating at a moment which peculiarly demands conciliatory conduct. If it be then unwise to promulgate at this juncture such a bill against practices really culpable, will you justify it by saying, that its purview will reach misdemeanours which no statute has hitherto defined, and which this bill does not pretend to describe?—Have you ascertained to yourselves exactly your own object in this bill? Have you calculated its real efficiency, even as to the point you may distinctly have in view? Do you mean that it should take away the capacity of feeling grievances, or prevent communications of any sort on political oppressions? Sir, all that such a bill could perform would be to establish that caution which would render dissatisfaction dangerous.

Whilst popular misconception has a tongue, it gives you warning, and allows room for prudence to apply a lenitive or to prepare coercion. If coercion be unhappily requisite—if you constrain discontents to be only in secret, discussion will become conspiracy, and attempts at redress will degenerate into hostile projects, sanguinary in proportion to the danger hazarded in their formation. By the vague wording of this bill, a novel principle seems to be introduced into the jurisprudence of this country, namely, that the *Quo animo* is no longer to be a question material in the trial of an indictment.

In all acts punishable by the statute book, the *Malus Animus* is an ingredient indispensable to constitute offence. A man meeting another in the street, without provocation kills him; here the malice propense is justly inferred, because the act could not spring from any other motive; still it is malice that determines between such a case, and one that would be deemed justifiable homicide. Now, Sir, will any man assume an analogy between the obvious motive in such cases of criminality, and the multifarious considerations which may instigate free citizens to consultation on their political circumstances. Sir, if we plume ourselves on being really representatives of the people, the very nature of constituency implies a right in those who delegate, to weigh the conduct of the persons whom they have delegated. Will you forbid assemblies for this purpose? I see no exception for this case in the bill—all left loose to be construed according to the passion or the interest of the hour, without the wholesome comment of the jury; twelve men, indeed, may be required to find the fact of a person's having been present at an assembly, but when they have found it, a judgment very different from their's will have to decide, whether such was the species of assembly which the legislature meant to interdict and chastise.

It is therefore that I wish that the measure should not extend beyond its proposed object, the threatened convention of Athlone. Conventions, even the most innocent, should be rarely resorted to; they may be good remedies, but they would be desperate bad diet. Upon the whole, this question should be argued principally upon its expediency, and I cannot conceive that Administration may do well to wink at a measure at one period, which at another may be wise to attend to. The great superintending power of Government ought not to interfere but upon subjects of importance.

"Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus."

In the Catholic convention their object was so explicit, so distinct, and so upheld by justice, that no man had to fear the subversion of society from either the meditated or accidental result of their proceedings.—But, Sir, what is the professed purpose of this intended convention? Is it not that it shall take essential government into its own hands? Judge of the temper and equity with which it would administer so formidable a sway. Your property might be the first victim to it, but the liberty of the people would be inevitably lost. I hope, therefore, the right honourable gentleman will so model and guard the bill, that we may be enabled to concur with him in resisting sedition or rebellion, should it dare to shew itself, protecting at the same time, as we are bound to do, the just and unalienable privileges of a free and loyal people.

Mr. DAY declared it his decided opinion, that the conventions which had sat in this country within these few years were unlawful, as trenching on the incommunicable rights and functions of Parliament.—The definition of an unlawful assembly which had been adduced from Hawkins, was a definition only of a particular species, not a general one. He instanced the case of a meeting of conspirators, where the privacy of the assembly ousted the idea of terror. Though that definition, therefore, might not apply to conventions, it would not follow that they were not unlawful assemblies. He excepted, however, from the charge of illegality, the first Dungannon meeting, which was justified from the necessity of the times. As to the Volunteer convention, he lamented his having been a member of it;—he gave a history of its origin and session, and asked, was not such an assembly accompanied with terror? The Catholic assembly he always had thought an illegal assembly, exciting fears and jealousies among his Majesty's subjects; and were it not for the interposition of his Majesty, and the prudent management of the gentlemen in this country, the most mischievous effects might have been produced by it.—Now that the danger from those assemblies was over, was in his mind, the proper crisis for declaring the law against similar ones in future. He was therefore against the amendment.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN spoke against the amendment, and supported the position, that the law of the land was as the bill declared it.—He said, the true criterion of the legality of any assembly was, whether the House of Commons would receive a petition from them, stating their nature, and the character in which they acted.—He denied that the House of Commons in either country had ever received a petition from a representative assembly, stating itself to be such.

Mr. CURRAN supported the amendment.—He maintained the legality of representative assemblies, when appointed for purposes different from legislation.—The people, when they returned a representative to Parliament did not part with all their powers, and they had a right to appoint delegates for the exercise of those which they retained. [Mr. Marcus Beresford, in the course of his speech, had been particularly severe on the last Dungannon meeting, for having expressed a disapprobation of the French war, in opposition to the sense of the House:] he alluded to this—instanced this very right of giving an opinion on Parliamentary measures, as one which the people were justified in exercising by delegation. He combated the arguments of Mr. Chamberlain; shewed that it was only through etiquette that the House of Commons would not receive a petition from an assembly acting by delegation, because in the instances which had been mentioned of the petitions from the English counties, in the year 1781, it

was notorious that the committee which had brought them before Parliament, was a delegated representative assembly : nay, the circumstance had been expressly stated in the House of Commons as a reason for refusing to receive the petition, and had been determined an insufficient one.

If the people had a right to petition, as was allowed on all hands they also must have a right to do so in the most convenient manner, which was evidently by delegation. Why was the House of Commons elected?—Why did not the people themselves assemble in *pleno comitatu* and exercise their rights themselves as a third estate?—Because such a proceeding must be attended with a violation of good order, and must be productive of tumult.—If on a matter of general concern, the people, exercising their undoubted right should meet at large in their respective towns and counties to petition, would not the same inconvenience follow?—Could it be criminal then for the people to govern themselves in this instance by the same principle as in exercising their legislative function?—Certainly not.—He then reasoned from the danger and impolicy of this measure at this particular crisis.—He recommended to the House to consider whether restraint imposed on an unquestionable right, would not prompt the people to exercise that right through opposition, and if it should have that effect, in what situation would the House find itself with 110 of its members placed and pensioned.

Counsellor JOHNSON spoke, principally to prove, that assemblies might be unlawful even when their object was of such a nature as did not immediately excite terror, and though unarmed. He instanced religious conventicles and congregations of certain descriptions, which were by law denominated unlawful assemblies. As to the idea that assemblies appointed by the people were illegal if not assuming the powers of taxation or legislation, but merely giving their opinion on public affairs, he thought it was making those assemblies say to Parliament as Trinculo said in the Tempest :

“ You shall be King, and I’ll be Viceroy over you.”

Mr. KNOX was of opinion, that the whole power of the people was delegated to Parliament. Locke, indeed, and some other theoretic writers assert, that there remains a supreme power in the people, but they shew at the same time that the exercise of this power presupposes the dissolution of all government. The Catholic convention, therefore, he thought, was illegal; but they had some excuse, for the Catholics were not included in the people; they were not represented, and therefore they were under some sort of necessity to adopt such an organ as the convention. If, however, conventions were tolerated, they would at last come

to struggle with Parliament for its authority; it was better therefore to strangle them in their birth.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE described the country as over head and ears in sedition: there were a great many Jacks the Painter in it; the House, however, had one good stake in the hedge, the exertions of a patriotic army.—The effusion of anarchy and confusion had done much mischief; and if any convention should presume to assume authority, he hoped Parliament would not be so chicken-hearted as to suffer it.

Major DOYLE suggested the necessity of quieting the fears of the Quakers, making some exception in favour of them, as they very often delegate members of their body for considering matters relating to church and state.—He knew their fears were unfounded, but it was right they should be removed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL declared nothing could be more remote from the intentions of gentlemen, than that the bill should affect any such delegations.

Mr. GRATTAN said, he knew not what the intentions of the bill were, but certainly the letter of it extended to those people. After all the arguments he had heard, he still was of his first opinion, that the bill declared as law what was not law; and the gentlemen themselves had conceded it; for the strain of their argument went only to shew that deputations for petitioning, and other great national purposes were illegal, but they acknowledged that deputations from particular descriptions of men for specified purposes were lawful; yet these last, as well as the former, were declared by the bill illegal. He explained what he had said yesterday, "that such an assembly as had been mentioned as about to meet at Athlone should be withstood." He did not mean to say such an assembly would be illegal; but that in these times such an assembly convened by letters missive from a particular society which perhaps might aim, not at the reformation, but perhaps the substitution, of Parliament, should be withstood.

Mr. OGLE declared, he would oppose any alteration whatsoever being made in the bill; and charged the gentlemen of the country with having neglected to suppress rebellion till it was now almost too late.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, he hoped it was not yet too late to check the spirit of rebellion. As to the legality of deputations for managing public concerns, he contended they were illegal in whatever shape. The instances which had been adduced of their being tolerated in England, did not prove

their legality. They were tolerated there only because they were contemptible and innoxious; but if they had once attempted to grasp at the legislature of the country, they would have been immediately crushed.

Mr. DUQUERY suggested, that both sides of the House might be reconciled, by confining the declarations and enactments of the bill to such deputed assemblies only as should assume any powers now vested by law in the knights, citizens, and burgessees.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL decidedly opposed this suggested amendment, as well as the proposed one, on the ground that the law of the land was already against all deputations whatsoever for petitioning or other public concerns. After speaking for some time on his former ground, in support of his position, the question on the amendment of Mr. Grattan was put, and negatived without a division.

The committee then went through the bill, and the House ordered the report to be presented to-morrow.

Mr. WESLEY presented a bill for regulating the Marshalsea of the Four Courts; which was read a first time.

FRIDAY, JULY 19, 1793.

The report of the committee on the convention bill being brought up,

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY could not give a silent negative to the bill; he conceived it to be a direct attack on the vital principles of the constitution.—It struck directly at the root of the liberty of the people, and at the means by which the people at any time might assert their liberty. He had not studied the bill much, but had read enough to found this opinion on.

The PRIME SERJEANT declared his approbation of the bill.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY rose again, and said, if the bill only went to prevent representative bodies from assuming functions peculiar to Parliament, he should not have objected: but if any attack should in future be made on the liberty of the people by any future Government, they were deprived by this bill of all means of resisting it, but by an appeal to arms.

Mr. HORART asserted that the bill only went to prevent such assemblies as the honourable member had described, and was sorry

he had used so incautious an expression as that people had no resource but in arms.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY explained: he only said, if an attack should be made on their liberties.

Mr. GRATTAN again repeated that the bill went to prevent all deputations of any description of men whatsoever; and therefore his objection to the bill remained in full force.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL defended the bill by his former arguments.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY shewed that the bill went to prevent the people from conferring about the subject of their petition, which would undoubtedly much weaken the constitutional power of the people.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL then moved, by way of amendment, that in the preamble, the words, "conventions and other unlawful assemblies," be omitted, in order to obviate the idea of the bill looking back to past assemblies.—This amendment being agreed to,

He moved that in the first clause the words, "and other public concerns," be omitted, as they were supposed to give the bill too great a latitude—and also the words, "to prevent like mischiefs in future;" both which amendments were agreed to.

The bill was then read a third time, and passed.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY rose and observed, that a right honourable relation of his had, some time since, by an unanimous vote of the House, obtained leave to bring in a bill for the more equal representation of the people in Parliament; and a committee was appointed in consequence to propose that bill; but the right honourable member who had obtained permission was himself unable to attend, and had requested of him to present the bill; which he now did, and moved that it be received.

He should not after the first reading make, at this late period of the session, any motion for a second reading; he should barely move, that it be printed, in order that the members of the House, and the public at large, might have time to consider it before the next session of Parliament. He trusted, however, that as the bill, from the magnitude of the object it embraced, might labour under many defects, in going forth in the present form, it would be considered with candour.

The permission of this House had been unanimously given for the introduction of this bill.—He trusted that the House would, with the same unanimity concur in aiding to carry it into effect,

and to correct any defects under which in its present state it might labour.

The bill being received was read a first time ;

When Sir HERCULES LANGRISHE rose, and spoke against the general principle of parliamentary reform.

Mr. WESLEY spoke to the same effect.

Mr. GEORGE PONSONBY observed that there was no question before the House—and he moved that the bill be printed; which after a few observations from Mr. JOHN O'NEILL and Mr. CONOLLY, was agreed to.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved that an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, that he would lay before his Majesty the humble desire of this House, that he would be pleased to grant the respective sums of 1500*l.* for completing the buildings of the House of Commons; 4000*l.* for the Courts of Justice; and 15,000*l.* to the Commissioners of Wide Streets. The motion was agreed to, and referred to a committee of the whole House.

SATURDAY, JULY 20, 1793.

The bill for the encouragement of the fisheries in this kingdom, was read a third time, and passed.

Also, the bill for receiving and continuing certain temporary statutes, and ascertaining the fees payable by Roman Catholics on taking the oaths.

Also, the bill for preserving the walls of the river Anna Liffey, and promoting the trade of Dublin, and rendering its port and harbour more commodious.

Mr. GRATTAN moved to resolve, that it would be expedient, that the commodities and produce of Ireland should be received into the ports of Great Britain, on the same terms as those of Great Britain are received into the ports of this kingdom.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER and Mr. Secretary HOBART entirely agreed in the propriety of the measure, which had been adopted in the first of the twenty-one propositions in the year 1785; but thought the entering into such a resolution at this time would be improper, and might be better adopted the beginning of the next session than just on the close of this, when the

British Parliament was adjourned, and nothing could be done in the business. That thus approving the principle, and not being authorised to say any thing farther, they should be very loath to give a negative to the motion; which, thus unauthorised, they should be obliged to do, if the question were to be put; to avoid which, they should move the order of the day, if the right honourable gentleman would not consent to withdraw; which, after some further conversation, Mr. Grattan did, on the reliance that the subject having been thus agitated, the servants of the Crown would do the best they could to complete the negotiation for that purpose during the adjournment.

The House then went into committee on the motion for an address to the Lord Lieutenant, to lay before his Majesty the desire of this House, that the King would grant a certain sum to the Speaker, Colonel Conyngham, Mr. Thomas Burgh and Mr. Hayes, to complete the additional buildings to the House of Commons; also, a certain sum to the Lord Chancellor and Chief Judges, towards building the Courts of Justice; and also to the Commissioners appointed by act of Parliament to make a wide and convenient way, street and passage, from Essex-bridge to the Castle of Dublin, to discharge a debt contracted by them, for opening a communication between Sackville-street and Carlisle-bridge; and that the House will make good the same.

The House then proceeded to take into consideration the amendments made by the Lords, in the bill (returned by them) to explain the act for the relief of the Protestant Dissenters of this kingdom; and to repeal a clause in the act of the second of Queen Anne, entitled, an act to prevent the further growth of Popery, as far as the same relates to the Protestant Dissenters.

The amendment being read, the House resolved, "that the said bill be rejected."

Mr. COOKE and Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL were then ordered to prepare and bring in a bill, to remove some doubts respecting persons in office taking the sacramental test; which bill Mr. Cooke presented, and it was read a first and second time; committed, reported, and ordered to be engrossed.

The House adjourned to Friday the twenty-sixth of July.

FRIDAY, JULY 26, 1793.

The bill to remove some doubts respecting persons in office taking the sacramental test, was read a third time, and passed.

Mr. MASON reported the vote of credit for 1,500*l.* for the buildings to the House of Commons; 6000*l.* for building the Courts of Justice; and 15,000*l.* to the Commissioners for making Wide Streets.

Mr. CORRY observed, that there was a power in the Lord Lieutenant to grant pensions to such of the revenue officers as had served forty years, and were superannuated. He thought that term too long, and as he had the concurrence of gentlemen on both sides of the House, he moved to address the Lord Lieutenant to abridge the forty years to twenty-five; which was ordered.

The House adjourned to Friday the sixteenth of August.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1793.

Mr. McARTNEY rose to apprise the House, that the Grand Canal Company had been unavoidably necessitated to a much longer protraction of the business of sinking docks, contiguous to the harbour of Dublin, than they apprehended would be necessary, under the conditions on which their former petition had been acceded to. He therefore gave notice, that he should, early in the next session of Parliament, present to the House a petition from that company on this head.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said, that satisfied as he was of the fairness of the honourable gentleman's objects, he should be happy in giving his support to the petition, whenever it should be brought forward, on the ground stated.

Mr. Secretary HOBART said, that he would not detain the House at this moment on any other subject, but that on which he was about to offer a motion; but the merits of the right honourable gentleman who was the object of it were such as made it indispensable. He then moved, "that the thanks of the House be given to the Right Hon. John Foster, Speaker, for his faithful and eminent services in the chair."

The same was agreed to *nem. con.*

Mr. JOHN WOLFE moved, that an humble address be presented to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, praying that he would be pleased to confer some high ecclesiastical preferment on the Hon. William Knox, chaplain to the House of Commons, for his attendance, &c.—Ordered.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER moved, that the books and journals of the session be printed:—Ordered accordingly.

The Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod then summoned the House to attend the Lord Lieutenant in the House of Peers.

Accordingly Mr. Speaker, with the House, went up, and the royal assent was given to the bills following:

PUBLIC BILLS

1. An act for the support of the honour and dignity of his Majesty's crown in Ireland, and for granting to his Majesty a civil list establishment, under certain provisions and regulations.

2. An act for continuing the duties granted to his Majesty on licenses for the retail of spirituous liquors, and for continuing the regulations for issuing such licenses, and for remedying the abuses which have arisen from the immoderate use of such liquors.

3. An act for the advancement of trade and manufactures, by granting the sums therein mentioned for the support of commercial credit.

4. An act for defraying the charge of the pay and clothing of the militia, for one year from the 25th of March, 1793, and for the more easily raising of the same.

5. An act to enable his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to issue treasury bills for raising the sum of 300,000*l*.

6. An act for continuing and amending the several laws relating to his Majesty's revenue, and for more effectually preventing frauds therein.

7. An act for amending an act, entitled, an act for repairing and preserving the walls of the river Anna Liffey in the city of Dublin, and for amending an act passed in the twenty-sixth year of his Majesty's reign, entitled, an act for promoting the trade of Dublin, by rendering its port and harbour more commodious.

8. An act for the further regulating the price at which coals shall be purchased, for the supply of the public coal-yards in the city of Cork, and sold out of the same.

9. An act to repeal so much of an act passed in the thirty-second year of his Majesty, entitled, an act for confirming the powers of the Society of King's Inns, Dublin, and to repeal an act, entitled, an act to regulate the admission of barristers at law, as confirms the charter of the said society.

10. An act more effectually to prevent, during the present war between Great Britain and France, all traitorous corres-

pondence with or aid or assistance being given to his Majesty's enemies.

11. An act to explain and amend an act passed in the last session of Parliament, entitled, an act to explain the trusts for which certain rectories impropriate and tithes, forfeited by reason of the rebellion in this kingdom in the year 1688, were conveyed to certain trustees nominated by the several bishops, in whose dioceses such rectories impropriate and tithes are situated.

12. An act to provide for the families of persons chosen by lot to serve in the militia of this kingdom.

13. An act for vesting in his Majesty the estates forfeited in 1688, yet remaining unfold.

14. An act for the trial of treasons committed out of the King's dominions.

15. An act to remove doubts respecting the functions of juries in cases of libel.

16. An act for the regulation of his Majesty's marine forces while on shore.

17. An act to explain and reduce into one act the several laws, for making, repairing or amending the turnpike roads leading from the town of Naas to the towns of Maryborough and Ballyroan, from the said town of Maryborough to the city of Limerick, and from the town of Nenagh to O'Brien's bridge.

18. An act to prevent the election or appointment of unlawful assemblies, under pretence of preparing or presenting public petitions, or other addresses, to his Majesty or the Parliament.

19. An act for the relief of insolvent debtors, in regard to the imprisonment of their persons.

20. An act for making and constituting a new parish, by the name of the Parish of Saint George, on the ground adjoining the city of Dublin therein described, and for erecting and building a parish church therein.

21. An act to remove some doubts respecting persons in office taking the sacramental test.

22. An act for the better regulation of the Marshalsea of the Four Courts in Dublin.

23. An act for the encouragement of the fisheries in this kingdom, and for continuing certain acts respecting the same.

24. An act for securing the freedom and independence of the House of Commons, by excluding therefrom persons holding any offices under the Crown, to be hereafter created, or holding certain offices therein enumerated, or pensions for terms of years or during his Majesty's pleasure.

25. An act to amend and explain an act passed in the thirty-second year of his present majesty's reign, entitled, an act for improving and keeping in repair the post roads of this kingdom.

26. An act for giving relief in proceedings upon writs of mandamus for the admission of freemen into corporations.

27. An

27. An act for regulating the trade of Ireland to and from the East Indies, under certain conditions and provisions, for a time therein mentioned.

28. An act respecting the collection of public money, to be levied in the county of the city of Dublin by presentment.

29. An act to prevent the excessive price of coals in the city of Dublin, and for encouraging the storage thereof.

P R I V A T E B I L L S .

1. An act to carry into effect an agreement entered into between the most noble Anna Eliza, Duchess Dowager of Chandos, and the Right Honourable Lady Anne Eliza Brydges, and James Stephens Brownlow, George Despard, Caleb Carden and William Carden, Esquires, concerning the manor and estate of Villers, in the barony of Upper Ossory, in the Queen's County, and for other purposes.

2. An act for vesting certain parts of the estates of Edmund Malone, of Ballynahown, in the county of Westmeath, Esq; in trustees, for the payment of debts, and for other purposes.

3. An act to enable John Dawson Coates, of the city of Dublin, Esq; and his daughters Elizabeth Duckett and Anna Hutchinson, to make leases under certain restrictions of certain estates and lands situate in the counties of Dublin and Meath, and county of the city of Dublin, and comprised in and settled by a certain settlement made the 8th of October, in the year 1791.

4. An act to dissolve the marriage of Mathias Finucane, Esq; with Anne Finucane, otherwise O'Brien, his now wife, and to enable him to marry again; and for other purposes therein mentioned.

5. An act for settling to certain uses a part of the real estate devised and directed to be purchased, by the will of Henry, Earl of Shelburne, deceased, freed from certain uses declared thereof by his will, and by an act of Parliament of Great Britain, entitled, an act for vesting part of the real estate devised and directed to be purchased, by the will of Henry, Earl of Shelburne, in the kingdom of Ireland, and in Token House Yard, London, in trustees, to be sold or mortgaged, and for laying out the money arising by such sale or mortgage thereof in the purchase of manors, lands or hereditaments in England, to be settled to the uses of his said will, and for enabling the persons therein mentioned to grant such leases as are therein expressed.

6. An act for vesting certain lands, tenements and hereditaments in the county of Limerick, and county of the city of Limerick, part of the settled estate of John Tuthill, of the city of Limerick, Esq; in trustees, in order by sale or mortgage of a competent part thereof to raise and pay the sum of 6000*l.* the

portions of the younger children of the said John Tuthill by Elizabeth Tuthill, otherwise Jackson, his wife; and also the sum of 1333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* part of the portion of Anne Minnitt, otherwise Tuthill, the sister of the said John Tuthill, and that such part of the said lands and premisses as shall remain unsold for the purposes aforesaid, may be and remain to the said John Tuthill, his heirs and assigns, in lieu and satisfaction of a sum of 5500*l.* due to the said John Tuthill, and which said sums of 6000*l.* 1333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* and 5500*l.* are charges affecting the settled estate of the said John Tuthill.

And then his Excellency was pleased to make a speech to both Houses of Parliament, which is as follows:

My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ The wisdom and firmness that have distinguished your conduct during the present session, and the attention you have afforded to the many important objects of your deliberations, demand my sincere acknowledgments, and enable me to relieve you from further attendance in Parliament.

“ Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

“ I have his Majesty’s commands to thank you for the liberal supplies you have voted for the public service, and for the honourable support of his Majesty’s government. You may rely upon their faithful application.

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ The wisdom and liberality with which you attended to his Majesty’s recommendation, in favour of his Roman Catholic subjects, are highly pleasing to the King. You must be fully sensible of his Majesty’s gracious condescension in committing to your judgment the application of the hereditary revenue; and I am ordered by his Majesty to signify his approbation of the provisions which have been made for the support of his civil Government, and the honour and dignity of his Crown; and to express his confidence that your liberal concessions to the Roman Catholics, and the measures for the regulation of the public expenditure, and for the limitation of offices and pensions, to which his Majesty has been graciously pleased to consent, with a view to the advantage of the public, will cement a general union of sentiment among all classes of his Majesty’s subjects, in support of the established constitution.

“ His Majesty has seen with real satisfaction that friendly disposition which has been manifested by the Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland, for strengthening the connection of

the two kingdoms by mutual acts of concession. I am authorised to acquaint you, that an act has passed the British Parliament to permit goods of Asia, Africa or America, legally imported into Ireland, to be imported from thence into Great Britain. This is a signal proof of her attention to your interests; whilst the confirmation of the charter of the East India Company by the Parliament of Ireland displays on your part a cordial zeal for the support of Great Britain, and a judicious consideration of the great and essential interests of the empire.

“ I am to make my acknowledgments for the many salutary laws you have enacted to strengthen the executive government, which will materially tend to defeat the designs of the enemies to the freedom and happiness of this kingdom.

“ The apprehensions of embarrassments, which for a time hung over commercial transactions, were to me a subject of the utmost anxiety; and I am to return you my thanks for sanctioning those measures which I took in support of credit, and which, I trust, have had the happiest effect in preventing the ill consequences of such apprehensions.

“ The spirit of discontent which prevailed amongst the lower classes of the people at the beginning of the session, has since burst into acts of riot and insurrection; and I have been under the painful necessity of employing his Majesty's forces, whose steadiness and good conduct have on all occasions been manifested, and by whose exertions the civil magistrates have been enabled, in a great measure, to restore the general tranquillity.

“ Under all the circumstances of the country, I thought it proper to call forth a very considerable portion of the militia of this kingdom. I am to express his Majesty's approbation of a measure which affords at present material assistance, and lays the foundation of a permanent constitutional force, that has been found by experience in Great Britain of great resource in public emergencies.

“ His Majesty feels with the greatest concern the expence brought upon his people by domestic disturbances, added to the consequences of a foreign war, into which we have been forced by the wanton and unprovoked aggression of France; but you will reflect that you are contending for the preservation of your property, and for the security of your happy constitution.

“ The successes with which it has pleased the Divine Providence to bless the arms of his Majesty and his allies, afford the best prospect of a happy issue to this important contest; and it is his Majesty's earnest hope that a continuance of vigorous exertions will finally obtain a secure and lasting peace.

“ I have entire confidence that in your respective counties, you will exert your utmost influence in maintaining the public tranquillity, and in carrying the laws into full execution. You may be assured that I shall on all occasions take the most speedy and

effectual measures, in the exercise of those powers with which I am invested, for the repression of outrage and tumult, and the protection of his Majesty's faithful and loyal subjects."

After which, the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Clonmell, Lord Chief Justice of his Majesty's Court of King's Bench, declared that it was his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant's pleasure, that this Parliament be prorogued to Wednesday the 25th day of September next; and the Parliament was accordingly prorogued to Wednesday the 25th day of September next.



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